













**SCOTLAND YARD  
AND  
THE METROPOLITAN POLICE**

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AND

THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

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## PREFACE

THE inclusion of a volume on Scotland Yard and the Metropolitan police in the Whitehall Series perhaps requires some explanation. Scotland Yard is not commonly thought of as a public department, but such it is, and the police are a branch—in some ways the most important branch—of the civil service of the country in the broad sense of that term.

The aim of the Whitehall Series is to provide accurate and authoritative information, and this book has been written with the idea of giving such information about the Metropolitan police ; but it does not pretend to anything like exhaustive treatment of the subject. Information about police matters has a tendency to lose in interest what it gains in accuracy, and I am conscious that a book written by an official about the police runs grave risk of being classed as a blue book. I have tried, therefore, to avoid overloading it with facts and figures. The space devoted to crime and the criminal, with which the name Scotland Yard is often exclusively associated, is in proportion to their relative importance in the everyday work of the police rather than to the general interest in the detective side of a policeman's job or the thrills of Flying Squad and Black Museum. The addition of an Appendix dealing with a murder case has involved some departure from this principle, as will be obvious

from a comparison of the murder statistics (p. 176) with those relating to the motor-car (pp. 247, 286), but the methods of criminal investigation are of such special and present interest as to warrant an account of the most important case of recent years.

*Ex pede Herculem* is a proverb which is no doubt peculiarly applicable to the police and generalisations about them from a rather different level of observation may afford an easy target for criticism. But the police, at least as much as any other human institution, may claim to be judged by their ideals or standards, and by the record of years rather than by any outcry of the moment—all the more so as they are specially exposed to unfair generalisations from particular cases.

Whatever the defects of this volume, and some at least are due to lack of space, it does, I hope, provide information which has not hitherto been available in an easily accessible form. Some matters treated of, with a view to making its scope as comprehensive as possible, may be of only domestic interest; on the other hand strictly domestic matters have necessarily been omitted. Nothing is told, for example, of the achievements of the police in the sphere of philanthropy and charity (the Police Orphanage, largely maintained by the efforts of the Police Minstrels; the Provident Association, etc.), or in sport and athletics (organised since the War under the Metropolitan Police Athletic Association with its sports ground at Imber Court).

It may be said that there is no branch of the public service about which the public have more right or need to be closely informed than

the police, because there is none that should be more nearly identified with the public. The police have made us what we are, in the sense that they are the props that for a century have sustained society and the amenities of civilised life, and, when the question arises from time to time, "What shall we make of the police?", the answer should come from a public rather better informed on the subject than has sometimes been the case. At the same time, the relations of police and public have been perhaps over-discussed of late, to the detriment of the tacit understanding which usually prevails between good friends.

Scotland Yard and the Metropolitan police have certainly been very much in the limelight in the last year or two. In so far as reference is made to recent happenings, what is said must not be taken as indicating the official view of them. It should also be explained that this book was mostly written before the Royal Commission on Police powers and procedure (Lord Lee's Commission) was appointed in August, 1928, and it was actually passing through the press when the Commission's report appeared.

The report is favourable to the police as a body. The Commission found little or no reason to think that the police are arbitrary or oppressive, or practise "third degree," or act as "agents provocateurs." They consider that the extent to which corruption exists has been greatly exaggerated and that cases of it are (as suggested in the last chapter of this book) mainly associated with the enforcement of laws which are out of harmony with public opinion, or in enforcing which the police are com-



pelled (as in the case of night clubs) by lack of adequate powers to have recourse to unsatisfactory methods of detection.

In the matter of criminal investigation the Commission's inquiry disclosed very little evidence of misconduct by the police, and they were satisfied that the existing safeguards make it impossible for any systematic impropriety of conduct to pass undetected or unchecked. At the same time they are uneasy on the subject of the voluntary statements by which accused persons so often incriminate themselves, and disquieted by some of the devices for obtaining statements which they believe to be employed by the C.I.D. (Scotland Yard). They recommend the introduction of further safeguards, as regards questioning by the police, safeguards of which the general trend is perhaps sufficiently indicated by the fact that they wish to see "Questioning by the Police Not Allowed" placarded in every charge room and cell. These precautions will be, they think, "quite as much in the higher interests of the Police force as of the 'rights and liberties of the subject.'" How far they are also reconcilable with success in criminal investigation is a matter on which opinions will differ and on which those of criminals would perhaps be the most instructive.\*

Some of the procedure followed in the Gutteridge case, which is described in Appendix I to this book, does not square with the Commission's recommendations, and, if the Commission's views prevail,

\* Further reference is made to the subject in Chapter VIII (pp. 180-4).

the case may perhaps become a classic example of criminal investigation, old style.

The Commission refer to the British tradition of fair play—even to the criminal, a tradition which they suggest originated, at the beginning of the nineteenth century or earlier, by way of reaction against the old severity of the criminal laws before Peel (inspired by Romilly and others) reformed these laws, and then by instituting an efficient police showed that certainty of detection was far more effective in preventing and repressing crime than indiscriminate punishment.

Another aspect of the matter is touched upon in Chapter VII of this book, and the Commission's report may be regarded as the latest expression of the British view that even in criminal investigation the end does not justify the means. It is well to remember, however, that it is due to the police, and not least to the Metropolitan police and the C.I.D., that we are able to hold such views in comfort, and to devote attention to questions of procedure that in other countries would seem academic and absurdly remote from the realities of crime and the practical business of criminal investigation. At the beginning of the nineteenth century barbaric methods were applied to the treatment of criminals in England because the state of the country as regards the prevention and detection of crime was practically a state of barbarism. As the efficiency of the police has increased, so have our humanitarianism and the strength of the sentiment of fair play to the criminal.

The Commission in their report refer to a recent increase in crime which is possibly an aftermath of the War, or due to economic conditions and unemployment. Taking a longer view, the outstanding fact is the progressive decrease in crime and disorder, with the result that the police have been increasingly set free to deal with what is spoken of in the last chapter as "the new crime," but may be more properly described as the civil regulation of the community. This change has undoubtedly helped to bring about the great improvement which has taken place since the War in the policeman's position and the general standardisation of the conditions of police service. It has also led to standardisation in practice and procedure, a matter difficult of attainment in criminal investigation which can be made to conform to rules and regulations only to a limited extent. The Commission are inclined to think that Scotland Yard and the Metropolitan police have not been kept sufficiently in touch with this movement towards uniformity, and they recommend *inter alia* the adoption by all forces, including the Metropolitan, of a standard instruction book indicating the general principles which should guide a constable in his work.

From an historical standpoint one cannot fail to be impressed with the extent to which Scotland Yard and its traditions have influenced and assisted the development of the whole police service and won for it the well-deserved repute in which all members share. The original source of uniformity of principle and practice in the police service of England and Wales may be found in the fact that, when

the county and city or borough forces were being formed in the second quarter of last century, not only were they largely trained by men from the Metropolitan police, but the Metropolitan Police Instruction Book was circulated by the Home Office to new forces and either adopted by them or made the basis of their schemes of instruction.

Two mistaken notions are current with regard to the actual relations of Scotland Yard to the police of England and Wales. One is that Scotland Yard has some sort of general jurisdiction in police matters ; the other that the Metropolitan police stand apart from and above other forces. Both ideas are erroneous. Scotland Yard does not control and has no desire to impinge in any way upon the local independence or management of any other force : its position as one member of what might be called the police commonwealth of England and Wales is only that of *primus inter pares*. There is not and there should not be any isolation splendid or otherwise. My aim in this book has been to treat the Metropolitan police as an example, though not necessarily the best example, of what is common to the English police service, and I hope that it may be of interest, and possibly of educational value, to other forces as well as to the Metropolitan.

As the book is published in the centenary year of the establishment of the new police by Sir Robert Peel, somewhat more space than might otherwise have been the case has been devoted to history, but the origins of the modern police system and the traditions and principles underlying it are of more than historical interest : they are, as already in-

licated, the background without which the police of to-day cannot be seen in their proper perspective.

It has not, however, been possible to do more than sketch the development of the various branches of the police. It is to be regretted that Captain Melville Lee's invaluable *History of Police in England* is out of print. My first chapter, which gives, in a very compressed form, an outline of events before 1829, and other historical portions of the book are based on standard works such as the writings of Stubbs and Maitland on constitutional history and of Mr. and Mrs. Sidney Webb on local government, on the reports and evidence published by the Commissions and Committees which inquired into police matters from 1770 onwards, and also, as regards the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, on records in the Public Record Office or the British Museum, and other contemporary sources of information.

I have received assistance from many, although for all opinions expressed I must take entire responsibility. I am greatly indebted for reading of typescript and proofs and for many suggestions to Mr. A. L. Dixon, C.B., C.B.E., the head of the Police division of the Home Office. Mr. C. R. D. Pulling, of the Commissioner's Office, has given special help as regards the chapters that deal with traffic and public carriages (XI and XII). I must also express my acknowledgments to Mr. H. A. Tripp of the same Office, and amongst my own staff to Mr. C. A. Palmer and to Captain Mostyn (who has assisted in researches at the British Museum and has been responsible for

the Indexes). Mr. Norman Kendal (Assistant Commissioner), Superintendent Abbott of A<sub>3</sub> branch of the Commissioner's Office (better known as "the Executive"), and Superintendent Abbiss, who is in charge of the Police school at Peel House, have very readily responded to requests for information and advice: finally, the principal police actor in the events described in Appendix I, Chief Inspector Berrett, kindly read and criticised my account of them.



## CONTENTS

	PAGE
<b>CHAPTER I.</b> Before Scotland Yard <i>The Old Police System and its Reform.</i>	1
<b>CHAPTER II.</b> The Commissioner of Police <i>A Hundred Years of Scotland Yard.</i>	29
<b>CHAPTER III.</b> State Control of the Metropolitan Police <i>The Home Secretary as Police Authority : The House  of Commons and the Police : The Home Secretary and  the Commissioner.</i>	58
<b>CHAPTER IV.</b> The Metropolitan Police District <i>Growth and Distribution of the Force : Map of  the District.</i>	75
<b>CHAPTER V.</b> Scotland Yard <i>The Office of the Commissioner of Police : Plan of  Organisation : The Scope of his Functions : Administra-  tion of the Force : Recruiting, Training and Discipline :  Civil Business : Miscellaneous Police Duties : The  Secretariat : The Lost Property Office : The Press  Bureau : Civil Servants and Police.</i>	93



	PAGE
CHAPTER VI. The Police Force in the Divisions : Its Local Organisation, Duties and Life	123
<i>Chief Constables : Superintendents : Inspectors and Station Officers : Sergeants and Constables : The Police Station : Section Houses and Married Quarters : Police Clothing and Equipment : Military and Police Discipline and Organisation compared.</i>	
CHAPTER VII. The Detective Police	149
<i>Their History : Persistence of the Old Prejudice against Detectives : The Establishment and First Years of the C.I.D.</i>	
CHAPTER VIII. The C.I.D.	165
<i>The Organisation of the C.I.D. : The Work of the C.I.D. : The Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure : The Special Branch.</i>	
CHAPTER IX. The Criminal Record Office	188
<i>Criminal Records : Finger Prints : The Crime Index : Police Publications : Convict Supervision.</i>	
CHAPTER X. Special Duties and Auxiliary Services	205
<i>River Police : Mounted Police : Hyde Park Police : Dockyard Police : Special Constabulary Reserve : Women Police.</i>	

# CONTENTS

xix

PAGE

CHAPTER XI.	The Police and Public Carriages	224
CHAPTER XII.	The Police and Traffic Control	239
CHAPTER XIII.	The Receiver of Police	253
	<i>Metropolitan Police Finance, Police Pay and Pensions : Police Buildings, Motor Transport, Wireless, etc.</i>	
CHAPTER XIV.	Police and Public	279
APPENDIX I.	The Gutteridge Case	295
APPENDIX II.	List of Commissioners, etc.	314



## Chapter I

### BEFORE SCOTLAND YARD

#### *The Old Police System and Its Reform*

"IN the last year of the reign of Charles the Second," says Macaulay in his History of England, "began a great change in the police of London, a change which has perhaps added as much to the happiness of the body of the people as revolutions of much greater fame." Macaulay is here using the word police in the old sense\* and is referring merely to the introduction of a system of street lighting. It is still true that "a good lamp is a good policeman," but we now date the great change in the police of London which has added much to the sum of happiness, from the last year of the reign of George IV, because it was in that year, 1829, that Sir Robert Peel established the London Metropolitan police force. This was the beginning

\* The word "police" may be said to have been imported into this country from France about the beginning of the eighteenth century. "The police of the town" at first meant the general arrangements for its good rule and government, in particular the lighting and scavenging arrangements. If to Macaulay "police" conveyed the idea of lamps, Disraeli was still more old-fashioned in his use of the word. In "Sybil" labourers' hovels are described as being "unprovided with the commonest conveniences of the rudest police; contiguous to every door might be observed the dunghheap." Before 1829 the word did not connote an organised police force, because such a thing hardly existed.

in England of a new and efficient system of police which has since become that of Great Britain and of the British Dominions, and has made the British standard of law and order and the British policeman the envy and admiration of the world.

Peel's reform of the police can indeed be accounted one of the most revolutionary changes in the social history of England. As a result of the establishment of the new police, the lives and property of law-abiding citizens were invested with a degree of security which we now accept as a matter of course, but which was previously thought to belong to the realm of unattainable ideals.

Like other English revolutions, however, this of 1829 had its conservative side. "A great part of the peculiar powers of the modern policeman," Maitland has pointed out, "is due to this, that he is a constable and, as such, has all those powers with which for centuries past a constable has been entrusted by the law." We may go further and say that the peculiar success of the modern English police system has been due, in great part, to the fact that in reorganising the police Peel preserved the centuries old office of constable and founded his new system on it. He "annihilated," to use his own expression, the London watchmen or "Charleys" (so named after the body of watchmen established in the City of London in Charles II's reign), and put an end to the annoyance and uselessness of their nocturnal cries, that bawling of the time and the state of the weather, at hourly or half-hourly intervals throughout the night, which the law had prescribed as an efficient method of enabling people to sleep quietly

in their beds. The ancient duty of watch and ward was in future to be carried out noiselessly and efficiently, day and night, by an organised body of constables.\*

The basis of the modern police system is thus the ancient office of constable, to which every policeman is appointed by making a solemn declaration that he will "well and truly serve our Sovereign Lord the King in the office of a constable." It can be traced back for about seven hundred years, and the name "constable" comes down to us from fifteen hundred years ago, being derived from the "comes stabuli," the master of the horse of the Eastern Roman Emperors at Byzantium. The name was inherited by the Franks as a military rank or title, and was brought to this country by the Normans. Constables are mentioned in Magna Charta, ignorance of the law and usurpation of jurisdiction being imputed to them, but these constables were mostly Commanders of the King's castles, and they were not the forerunners of the police constable.

The police constable is the descendant of a minor local officer, the hundred or township constable, of whom the first mention is in a Writ or edict of Henry III's in 1252 for the enforcement of the Assize of Arms.† It ordered that all men

\* In some places the parish watch had become quite efficient before it was abolished, as, for example, in St. James's, where the watchmen were Chelsea pensioners, under captains of the watch and an inspector.

† The Assize of Arms was a measure of Henry II's (1181), requiring all men to be in possession of arms according to their rank and means: it revived the old Anglo-Saxon militia, as a counterpoise to the baronial levies, and at the same time ensured that all

should be duly "sworn to arms," in other words, enrolled in the militia before the local mayor, reeve, or bailiff: in townships or villages without such an official, a constable (*constabularius*) was to be appointed for the purpose, and there was to be a head constable for every hundred with a general responsibility for all matters that related to the preservation of the peace. The hundred constable appears again in Edward I's famous Statute of Winchester (1285). This was a general re-enactment of the law regarding the preservation of the peace (*hue and cry*, *watch and ward*, etc.), and the hundred constables were charged afresh with its enforcement.

The constable with whom we are concerned was thus associated at first with the military system of the country—the preservation of the King's peace by force of arms. He was in effect, as Maitland says, a petty officer in the militia. This military, or semi-military origin was inevitable; in feudal times the preservation of the peace was necessarily a form of war. When the civil and the military aspects of the national and local polity were disentangled, with the passing away of feudal conditions, the constable was demilitarised and became a peace officer with no martial characteristics. He replaced or became identified with the purely civil office or post of tithingman, which carries back to Anglo-Saxon or early Norman times, when, under the peace preservation system known as *Frankpledge*, the population was organised in hundreds and tithings (*tens*),

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were properly armed for the pursuit of malefactors when the "*hue and cry*" was raised.

and the tithingman was a sort of village headman, whose functions are indicated by his other names of "headborough," or "borhsealdor" (chief surety).\* If a crime was committed, the hundred had to find out the tithing to which the offender belonged, and the tithing had to produce him or pay compensation.

When the ecclesiastical parish displaced the township or manor as the unit of local administration, the parish, or petty constable as he was called, became the most important parochial officer, dealing with nearly all the parish troubles, such as paupers, vagrants, apprentices, etc. He was usually appointed or sworn in at the local court of the Manor, known as the Court Leet. It was not until the seventeenth century that the appointment of constables began to be transferred from Courts Leet to the justices in Quarter Sessions, and this method of appointment only partially displaced the old feudal one; many parish constables were still being appointed at Courts Leet within living memory.

The office of petty or parish constable was unpaid, save for certain customary fees and allowances for expenses, and, in theory, had to be served by the parishioners in rotation (generally for a year at a time), like the other parish offices of churchwarden, surveyor, sidesman, etc. In a large parish there might be several constables, but it was usually one parish, one constable. As the office became increasingly

\* "Tithingman," "headborough" and "borsholder" (borhsealdor) became synonyms for "constable," and remained in use as such until the nineteenth century; they are given as alternative descriptions of the parish constable in the Parish Constables Act of 1872.



burdensome and unpopular, the type of person filling it declined, and the employment of paid deputies became common. Both these developments are illustrated in Shakespeare's pictures of the constable—Dogberry, Verges and Elbow.

The constable came to be regarded as a Crown officer, in virtue of being a conservator or keeper of the peace, which was the King's peace, and from an early period he was required on appointment to take an oath or make a declaration of service to the Crown, as he still does. At the same time he was the agent or representative of the local inhabitants, chosen or nominated at the Court Leet by a local jury. It is still the constitutional theory of the English police system, that the policeman, although in a sense an officer of the Crown, represents not the central government but the local community, discharging duties and exercising powers which by common law belong to all citizens.

Speaking generally, the petty or parish constable was subject to the superintendence or superior authority of a head or high constable for the hundred, but it was with the justice of the peace that the constable came to be most closely associated. The office of justice of the peace was at first entirely an executive one, "little more than a constable on a large scale" (Stephen). It is generally considered to have originated, towards the end of the twelfth century, in the appointment of knights in every shire to take oaths to keep the peace from all males over 15. These knights developed into conservators of the peace known as justices, who gradually became the principal peace officers of the country, relieving

that once all-powerful royal officer, the sheriff, of most of his responsibility. The constable became the justice's assistant, executing his orders or warrants and arresting offenders. The constable also had the duty of making presentments or reports to the justices assembled in Quarter Sessions and to the Judges at Assizes, as to any offences committed in his district and as to the general morality and behaviour of the inhabitants. In this duty we may see an early and inquisitorial form of the detective side of a policeman's functions.

Justice and constable were thus the superior and inferior conservators of the peace, or peace officers, and, with the assistance of other minor functionaries such as night watchmen, and some reliance on obsolescent institutions like the *posse comitatus*\* (or power of summoning all males in a county to assist in preserving the peace—which was, in effect, the power of calling out the old militia), they constituted the general police system of the country from the fourteenth to the nineteenth century.

Under the Tudors and Stuarts the powers and duties of justice and constable were constantly being added to without, however, much increasing their effectiveness as instruments for preventing lawlessness or ensuring the safety of life and property. So long as swords were common wear and the criminal classes were not clearly distinguishable from the rest of the population, or indeed from justices and constables, an efficient police system

\* The power of the sheriff to call out the *posse comitatus* still exists; it was kept alive by the Sheriffs Act, 1887. In America the *posse comitatus* survives in the sheriff's "posse."

was neither practicable nor in any demand. During the Civil Wars and the Protectorate, normal methods were over-ridden by a military régime. After the Restoration there developed a new England of crowded town populations, and crime and disorder took on new forms, at the same time becoming more and more repugnant to an increasing commercial and civilised community. The inadequacy in these new conditions of the old police system, designed as it was for rural communities, was most marked in London, where the need for efficient police protection was greatest.

The London in question was not the City of London, which had constituted the Metropolis down to Tudor times, and has since maintained a separate and independent jurisdiction in police, as in other matters.\* Scotland Yard can claim no ancestry in the comparatively well-developed system of watch and ward which the City possessed as early as the

\* Subsequently to the establishment of the Metropolitan police several Royal Commissions and Committees recommended that the City police should be incorporated in the Metropolitan, but the City Fathers, the Common Council, always successfully resisted, and the City is still guarded by its own force of stalwarts, who may be rightly described as "second to none." The City police were, perhaps, nearest to being swallowed up by the Metropolitan in 1863, when, after the failure of the City authorities to preserve order on the occasion of the passage of Princess Alexandra through the City, the Government introduced a Bill for the amalgamation of the two forces. The City defeated this attempt with the general aid of the municipal corporations of the country, who were induced to regard it as threatening their privileges also.

thirteenth century, but, on the other hand, the City police were, in 1839, established anew on the lines of the Metropolitan. The police system, with which we are concerned and which was reformed by Peel (who was "afraid to meddle with" the City of London), was that of the city and liberty of Westminster with adjacent parts of Middlesex and Surrey, and other Home counties. Westminster and these suburbs formed the new metropolis. In contrast to the compact and well-ordered domain of the Lord Mayor and Aldermen, this London grew in straggling fashion, as a mass of disconnected and uncontrolled units of local government—liberties, manors and parishes, with their courts, vestries, boards, commissioners, etc.

Westminster itself had in its Court of Burgesses, established in 1585 by Lord Burleigh, a municipal authority under the ecclesiastical control of the Dean and Chapter of the Abbey and their lay representative, the High Steward. For two hundred years or so the burgesses disputed with the Middlesex and Westminster justices the right to mismanage police matters (mostly in the old sense of the word police—lighting, paving, muckraking, etc.), and tyrannise over their unfortunate neighbours. The burgesses had originally the direction of the Westminster watch or night police, and proposals for transferring the watch to the control of the justices were rejected by the House of Commons in 1704 and again in 1720; but, from 1735 onwards, a series of local Acts substituted for the Westminster watch a separate body of watchmen in each parish, under boards of directors, trustees or commissioners,

constituted of persons who had served the offices of churchwarden and overseer.

As regards the constables of Westminster, there was a change in the other direction. Originally appointed separately for each parish, they became in the eighteenth century constables for the whole of the city and liberty, and were appointed at the Westminster Court Leet, where the deputy High Steward presided over the burgesses. There were eighty of them, and their main occupation seems to have been to attend in turn at the Houses of Parliament\* and to do night duty with the watch, the latter duty being evaded as much as possible. They were in the unsatisfactory position of having two masters—the justices, who employed them to execute their warrants, etc., but, strictly speaking, had no disciplinary control over them, although they often presumed to exercise it, and the burgesses who appointed them but had little say in their management. Outside the nine parishes of Westminster, in the growing suburbs of Middlesex and Surrey, there were varying numbers of parish constables, beadles and watchmen.

In 1770 an alarming increase in burglaries and housebreakings in Westminster led to the appointment of the first of the seven parliamentary Committees of inquiry which preceded the eventual reform of the police in 1829. Its report showed that the watchmen were few, infirm and generally unfit,

\* But in June, 1780, when the Houses of Parliament were surrounded by the mob, at the beginning of the Gordon Riots, only six of these constables could be found, and they were shut up in the Guildhall to keep them safe.

and that the office of constable was largely delegated to hired deputies who made a living of it as best they could and were often persons of the worst description. "The greatest criminals in the town," Horace Walpole had written in 1742, "are the officers of justice. There is no tyranny they do not exercise, no villainy in which they do not partake." The report of the Committee of 1770 was followed by legislation in 1774 for the improvement of the night watch, but a further Committee of 1792 reported that this law was a dead letter and that the watch was "very irregular and various," and so it remained until its abolition in 1829.

The degradation which the office of constable underwent in London and other towns in the eighteenth century, was made all the worse by the corruption of the urban justices. The honest exercise of a justice's functions was such a disagreeable business in large towns, and so full of risk for those who were not expert in the law, that very few persons of standing would undertake it. The justices who regularly attended the Middlesex Sessions at Hicks' Hall (afterwards the Clerkenwell Sessions House) under Sir John Hawkins, or the Westminster Sessions under the Fieldings, were mostly reputable and efficient, but the general body of their Worshipships was composed of ignorant and often rapacious individuals. Many tolerated and encouraged disorder as a source of income, and sold warrants and summonses like articles of commerce, their houses or offices being known as "justice shops."

Some improvement in this state of affairs had

been effected before 1770 by the development of petty sessions and of public offices or "rotation offices," where justices sat in public. It was at the famous public office at Bow Street that practical steps towards reform of the police were first taken. In 1749 a new "plan of police" had been set on foot at Bow Street by Henry Fielding, the novelist and magistrate, and it was continued and enlarged by his half-brother, the blind Sir John Fielding, with the notable assistance of Dr. Johnson's friend, Saunders Welch, then High Constable of Holborn and subsequently magistrate at Bow Street and at a public office in Lichfield Street.

The story of Bow Street would make a book in itself. It commences with Colonel Sir Thomas De Veil (1664-1746) who, as Captain De Veil, left the Army after the Peace of Utrecht and, finding his Army half-pay insufficient, was moved by some prophetic influence to settle down in an office in Scotland Yard.\* He subsequently became an acting justice and eventually established himself at Bow Street, the first in the long line of Bow Street magistrates. De Veil is of importance as a link between the old and the new. He got himself recognised as "the Court Justice," that is to say, the London justice who was in confidential relations, mainly for police purposes, with the Court or Ministry. This semi-official post of Court Justice (rewarded from secret funds) is found as early as Elizabeth's reign. In De Veil's time control of affairs had passed from the Court to the Ministry, and it was to Walpole's Ministry that De Veil made himself useful, as, for example, in

\* As an agent for memorials to public departments.

connection with the enforcement of the unpopular Gin Act of 1736, which was an unsuccessful attempt at drastic restrictions on the sale of spirits. De Veil gave the post of Court Justice a local habitation at Bow Street, where, under his successors the Fieldings, it was converted into that of "First Magistrate in Westminster," or Bow Street magistrate.

The Bow Street magistrate under the old régime was as much a police officer as a magistrate, and Bow Street was in a sense the cradle not only of the Metropolitan Police Courts, but also of the Metropolitan police, the latter being in part a development of and in part a reaction from the Bow Street system of police. It was at Bow Street that the professional police officer and a science of police began to replace the amateur policeman and the old idea that police duty was one of the general obligations of citizenship, to be undertaken, like jury service, by all in turn and to be reconciled, as well as might be, with other occupations.

Henry Fielding organised a small band of parish constables and ex-parish constables who, with the aid of judicious and secret disbursements to informers, out of money supplied by the Government, succeeded in breaking up the gangs of street robbers who then infested London. Previously the Government had paid out large sums as public rewards\* with no result, except that of fostering unprincipled informers who swore away innocent lives. Fielding's men at first earned little but unpopularity by their efforts, being denounced as "thieftakers," a name which was then practically

\* Statutory or parliamentary rewards and rewards by Proclamation.



synonymous with that of "informer." Under Sir John Fielding, however, these "thieftakers" became paid whole-time officers attached to Bow Street, known at first as "persons belonging to Sir John Fielding," or as "Sir John Fielding's men," and later as the Bow Street "runners."\*

The Bow Street runners, who are referred to again in Chapter VII, were the beginning of the detective police. The other branch of the Bow Street police, the patrols, were the prototype of the uniformed force, and they served Peel in some degree as a model for his new police. As early as 1763 Sir John Fielding, after experimenting with a private subscription scheme, organised with Government money a horse patrol of ten men, but this was discontinued after a few years on the ground of expense. It was succeeded in 1782 by the Bow Street foot patrols, a body of sixty-eight armed men who patrolled the roads on the outskirts of London to a distance of four miles from the "stones' ends" (the ends of the paved streets). In 1805 a new horse patrol, whose ultimate strength was seventy-two, was instituted to patrol the main roads from where the foot patrol ended to a distance of sixteen miles or so into the country. In 1821 the patrols were reorganised by Lord Sidmouth. Because of the prevalence of street robberies in London he withdrew the foot patrol from the outskirts to the centre of London and assigned "the verge and vicinity of the Metropolis"

\* The Bow Street runners and patrols and the constables of the police courts established in 1792 were also termed "police officers" or "police," to distinguish them from the parish constables.

to a separate body "the dismounted horse patrol," so called because the horse patrol was recruited from it. Next year Peel established a day patrol who did duty in the West End of London (Oxford Street and its neighbourhood) during the day-time, in three parties of eight men each under an inspector.

The Bow Street patrols, who were all sworn in as constables, were designed as a preventive measure against highwaymen and footpads, and within this limited sphere were very successful. A total force eventually of 300, they were, except for Peel's small day patrol, a night or rather an evening police. They came on duty at dusk and went off at midnight or soon after, being called out in the day-time only on very special occasions. They were all nominally under the control of the Chief Magistrate at Bow Street and an officer known as "the Conductor," but the horse and dismounted patrols were in their later years administered by a Home Office official from a separate office in Cannon Row.

Bow Street thus developed from 1750 onwards a body of police who were peculiar to London and were the forerunners of the organised police forces of to-day. But in tracing the development of the Bow Street police we have anticipated the general course of events after the first inquiry into the state of the police in 1770. This inquiry achieved nothing and a devastating example of the extent to which police protection was lacking and life and property were at the mercy of the rabble was afforded by the Gordon Riots of June, 1780, when, in the words of the Annual Register, "for six days

successively the Cities of London and Westminster were delivered up into the hands of an unarmed and nameless mob to be plundered at its discretion." The riots were nominally an anti-Catholic outbreak arising out of the Catholic Disabilities Act, 1778, but they quickly developed into an orgy of drunken looting by "the very scum and refuse of London, whose growth had been fostered by bad criminal laws, bad prison regulations and the worst conceivable police," as Dickens says in "*Barnaby Rudge*."

Under the Riot Act of 1715 and an earlier statute of Henry IV, justices of the peace had the special duty, as representing the civil power, of quelling tumults and dispersing tumultuous assemblies, but, as the parish constables were incapable of coping with a mob, the only way in which the civil power could deal with riots was to summon the military—an invidious responsibility. In May, 1780, just before the Gordon Riots, Westminster magistrates were denounced in the House of Commons for daring to requisition the military (when an election riot was feared) and had been held up to scorn as "reptiles." It was not surprising that in the crisis of June, 1780, they hid themselves and, in the words of Lord Stormont, Secretary of State, were remarkable for "lethargy and persistent absence," especially when they saw Bow Street sacked and the houses of other active justices burnt.

Ministers viewed the outbreak as an "insurrection," but it could have been checked at the outset by a small force of resolute and trained police. During and after the riots the justices and the

police system in general were assailed on all sides by a storm of indignant execration which seemed likely to herald a drastic reform of the police. In the House of Lords Lord Shelburne, who was Home Secretary and Prime Minister in 1782-1783, said that "the police of Westminster was an imperfect, inadequate and wretched system" which ought to be "entirely remodelled and that immediately." He recommended the Government to imitate the French police system, but to avoid its perversion to political ends and espionage by placing it under the control of elected magistrates. He seems to have changed his mind when he took office, as it is on record\* that, had he remained longer at the Home Office, he would have made the establishment of a real police force under the control of the Secretary of State, one of his principal objects.

Lord Shelburne's intentions in the matter of police reform passed as a legacy to Pitt's ministry, and one of its first measures was to introduce into Parliament in 1785, "the London and Westminster Police Bill," which was, in some ways, a remarkable anticipation of the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. Under it the Cities of London and Westminster and the adjacent parts of Middlesex and Surrey were to have been constituted a single police district, and "the whole power of police" entrusted to three Commissioners of Police with the command of all existing parish constables, beadles and watchmen and a small properly paid police force of their

\* See the "Life of Lord Shelburne, by Lord FitzMaurice Vol. II, p. 60.

own, consisting of some 225 "patroles" under nine superintendents.

The second part of the Bill made provision for the establishment in different parts of London, of nine police offices or courts, on the model of Bow Street, with stipendiary magistrates. These offices were to be under the general supervision of the Commissioners of Police, and it was this proposal, and the inclusion of the City of London in the new police district, that wrecked the Bill, although the Solicitor-General (Sir Archibald Macdonald) represented it as the only means of rescuing the community from the tyranny of the criminal classes. The state of affairs in London was such, he said, that "no man could promise himself security even in his bed." The Middlesex justices and the City united in strenuous opposition, the former denouncing the Bill as "a dangerous innovation" calculated to "annihilate the ancient and constitutional office of justice of the peace," while the Lord Mayor and Aldermen attacked it on the ground that it would mean "the entire subversion of the chartered rights of the greatest city in the world," "overturning the forms established by the wisdom of our ancestors" and setting up "a system of police altogether new and arbitrary in the extreme." These protests were an expression of the national hostility to any attempt at subordinating the magistracy to the executive. Peel's reform, when it came, was based on a separation of judicial and executive police functions which was to be completed in London by the Metropolitan Police Courts Act, 1839.

The Bill of 1785 was dropped,\* but the idea of having police offices or courts with stipendiary magistrates had met with approval and was carried out seven years later in the Middlesex and Surrey Justices Act of 1792, which established seven of the London police courts, each with three magistrates (at £400 a year) and six constables (at 12s. a week). Even this measure was strongly opposed by the Whigs, who considered that it was a mere device for extending the patronage of Ministers. "This system of police," said Sheridan, "was nothing more than a system of influence." As a concession to the opposition, the Act was made a temporary one and did not become permanent until 1805.

The establishment of police offices with paid magistrates† and constables attached to them marked a definite advance in the direction of police reform. It opened the way for the introduction of a larger body of paid police, and the trading justices were put out of business because the functions of unpaid justices were restricted to a few unimportant and routine matters and fees could henceforth be taken only at the police offices. As a result, the "lay" justice in London, in the district assigned to the Metro-

\* In 1786 the Dublin Parliament adopted most of the provisions of the Bill and a police of sorts came into existence in Dublin under the control of three of the magistrates, who were termed Commissioners of Police, but it was not until 1838 (in the Under-Secretaryship of Thomas Drummond) that a real police force, the Dublin Metropolitan Police, was established in the Irish capital on the lines of Peel's police.

† From the time of Henry Fielding the Bow Street magistrates had been paid by way of "pension" from secret service moneys.

politan police courts, has since 1792 had much more restricted functions than elsewhere.

The Act of 1792 had another interesting consequence. The Home Secretary of the time was Henry Dundas, afterwards Lord Melville, and one of the new magistrates appointed by him was a fellow Scotsman—Dr. Patrick Colquhoun. Colquhoun had previously been a merchant in Virginia and then Lord Provost of Glasgow, where he founded the Glasgow Chamber of Commerce. He became known as the “Father of Glasgow,” and has been hailed by some as also the father of the Metropolitan police,\* because of his efforts in the cause of police reform. He published in 1796 his well-known *Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*, and in 1798 submitted to Pitt’s Finance Committee, who were searching for economies and improvements in the public service, proposals for police and penal reform which seemed likely at the time to be adopted by the Government. It was an elaborate scheme for a central Board of Police Revenue whose Commissioners were to be in control of all arrangements with respect to police, aliens and convicts.

\* Peel’s claim to this honour is disputed by others, amongst whom should be mentioned (as a set-off to the Scotsmen—Macdonald, Dundas and Colquhoun), the Irish journalist, Vincent Dowling, editor of *Bell’s Life*. Dowling corresponded with Lord Sidmouth, Peel and Lord Lansdowne, the Home Secretaries of 1812 to 1829, and wrote articles in *The Times* and *The Observer* and in his own paper on the subject of police reform. He informed the Parliamentary Committee of 1834 that Peel’s scheme was “in the letter and the spirit” precisely the same as that which he had submitted to Lord Lansdowne in 1827. The Committee published his evidence without his name, as that of “a gentleman extensively connected with the Press.”

Colquhoun's book, which was largely an exposure of the state of crime in London, with alarming and unverifiable statistics, served, in conjunction with the parliamentary inquiries of the period, to advertise the need for reforming the criminal law and the police system. The parliamentary Committee of 1838 spoke of Colquhoun as "the first to point out the necessity and practicability of a system of preventive police upon a uniform and consistent plan." Colquhoun undoubtedly gave prominence to the idea of prevention as the main function of police. Before his time police reform had been principally concerned with detection and with punishment.

Colquhoun's practical achievement was the establishment of a "Marine Police" for the Thames in 1798-1800. This body of river police, who are more fully dealt with in Chapter X, are usually regarded as the first organised police force of the modern type, and it was with reference to them that the word "police" was first used to denote a police force. It is noteworthy that they were started by the private enterprise of the West India merchants. Many other forms of "police by private subscription" were similarly organised from about 1800 onwards and the Royal Commission of 1836-1839, which led to the establishment of county police forces in England and Wales, reported that there were then over 500 voluntary associations for promoting the apprehension and prosecution of offenders, commonly known as "Prosecution Societies," besides numerous other associations for the repression of vagrancy and



mendicity. Their existence, said the Commissioners, proved that the community in which they arose was relapsing into a state of barbarism. Some of these associations confined themselves to offering rewards, while others employed paid constables and watchmen. The river police were a great success but Colquhoun's other schemes made no headway.

In 1812, however, police reform seemed about to make some headway on the wave of popular anger and alarm which was caused by the Ratcliffe Highway murders of December, 1811. De Quincey, in his essay on *The Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth*, says of the murderer, generally believed to have been a sailor named Williams, who committed suicide, that "all other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his; and, as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, 'There has been absolutely nothing doing since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of.'" The murders were almost massacres, two whole families being wiped out. Tremendous excitement prevailed and there was a general call for action by the Government, but all that happened was the appointment of a Select Committee to inquire into the state of the police, which contented itself with recommending that the watch should be brought under the control of the magistrates of the police offices, and that the Chief Magistrate at Bow Street should have a general oversight of police arrangements.

Nothing was done on this report, and four years later we come to the grand parliamentary inquest into the police of the Metropolis, by the Committee

which sat from 1816 to 1818 and published several reports and a mass of evidence. This Committee, besides investigating the police system and exposing the corruption and inefficiency of the parish officers, and the dubious methods of the Bow Street runners, also conducted a prolonged inquiry into the administration of the licensing laws and all sorts of social evils, in connection with disorderly houses, prisons, juvenile delinquency, etc. In an interim report in 1817, they condemned in the strongest terms that part of the police system which was associated with "blood money." "Blood money" meant the statutory or "parliamentary" rewards (fixed at £40 in each case) which have been already referred to; they were payable to those who gave information leading to the arrest and conviction of criminals. Parliamentary rewards were first resorted to, in the absence of an efficient police, during the reign of William III, in the hope of putting down highwaymen; the system was gradually extended to other classes of crime and was exploited, at the beginning of the eighteenth century by the notorious Jonathan Wild, who constituted himself "Informer-General," and, at the beginning of the nineteenth by some of the Bow Street runners. Henry Fielding had exposed the futility and evils of the system, but it continued in existence and was responsible for appalling miscarriages of justice.

In their third report in 1818 the Committee examined and rejected the idea of a central board or office of police, but recommended that the post of High Constable, which had almost ceased to

function except as a parasite of publicans and an agency for the supply of coal and other goods to licensed premises, should be converted into a salaried wholetime post under the direct control of the police offices, with the duty of watching over the general state of the police in each district. However, no legislative or administrative action as regards police followed on the labours of the 1816-1818 Committee, whose final conclusion was that "the police of a free country was to be found in rational and humane laws—in an effective and enlightened magistracy . . . above all, in the moral habits and opinions of the people."

In June, 1820, in connection with the disturbances after Queen Caroline's return to this country, the Duke of Wellington urged the Prime Minister, the Earl of Liverpool, that "the Government ought, without the loss of a moment's time, to adopt measures to form either a police in London or a military corps, which should be of a different description from the regular military force, or both." The Guards had had to be called upon to maintain order during the popular ferment on this occasion and had patrolled the streets in small bodies. They were as much in sympathy with the Queen as the rest of the populace, and Wellington had not only been caused great anxiety by the symptoms of unrest among them but felt strongly that police duty ought not to be entrusted to troops. His representations had no result, and in August, 1821, very serious riots took place round the Queen's coffin. The Life Guards, the Horse Guards, the Blues and the Dragoons were all

employed to support the Chief Magistrate at Bow Street (Sir R. Baker) and the patrols and parish constables, in vain efforts to prevent the funeral procession from passing through London and being received by the Queen's sympathisers in the City. There was considerable bloodshed in and around Piccadilly and Oxford Street, and the Life Guards then acquired and long retained the name of "The Piccadilly Butchers." The Queen Caroline riots resulted in the dismissal of the Chief Magistrate for his failure to restrain the mob, and the whole incident illustrates the point that before 1829 the functions of the Bow Street magistrate included executive responsibilities which are now vested in the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis.

In 1822, Peel, having begun the reorganisation of the police system of Ireland during his term as Irish Secretary (1812-1818), and made a first bequest of the name "Peelers" to the constabulary established in that country under the Peace Preservation Act, 1814, entered upon office as Home Secretary. He at once secured the appointment of a committee under his own chairmanship to conduct an inquiry, which he hoped would result "in obtaining for the Metropolis as perfect a system of police as was consistent with the character of a free country." These were high hopes, but it took the Committee less than three months to come to the conclusion that the two things were incompatible. It was a practical impossibility, they reported, "to reconcile any effective system of police with that perfect freedom of action and exemption from interference which was one of the great privileges

and blessings of society in this country." This was not to be Peel's view of the matter. As he wrote in 1829 to the Duke of Wellington, his idea was to "teach people that liberty does not consist in having your house robbed by organised gangs of thieves." But he made no progress with the question of police reform in 1822, devoting his first term of office as Home Secretary to reform of the criminal law—a very desirable preliminary to reform of the police. The first reform attacked the old idea that severity of sentence was the best preventive of crime; the second was to substitute for it quickness and certainty of arrest and punishment.

In February, 1828, Peel was again Home Secretary and obtained the appointment of yet another Committee, whose recommendations ensured the necessary parliamentary backing for his projected reform by a final and conclusive exposure of the need for it. Their report showed that convictions for criminal offences in London, Westminster and Middlesex had increased 36 per cent. faster than the population since the beginning of the century. This was attributable to the cheapness of gin, unemployment, neglect of children, juvenile gambling and, above all, "lack of vigour and consistency" in the police. A large part of the inquiry was devoted to the practice of compromising for the restitution of stolen property. The Committee found that such compromises were regularly negotiated with thieves and receivers, under an organised system, to which solicitors and police officers, in particular the Bow Street officers, and even the Banks, were parties.

The Committee also exposed the evils of "flash houses"—the name given to those disreputable taverns which served as harbouring places for criminals. The Bow Street officers considered that the existence of "flash houses" was essential to their business, in order that they might know where to find criminals when they were ripe for arrest, that is when, in the slang phrase, they "weighed forty pounds," having committed some offence in respect of which the officer could receive the statutory reward of that amount. A "flash house" opposite Bow Street, "The Brown Bear," was the headquarters of the Bow Street police, and was used for the detention of prisoners, in the absence of an official "jug."

To remedy the state of affairs disclosed in their report, the Committee recommended that there should be constituted an office of police, acting under the immediate direction of the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with a general control over all establishments of police in the Metropolis and its environs. Their report was presented in July, 1828, and in the next session of Parliament their recommendations took shape in the Metropolis Police Improvement Bill. The first reading of the Bill was moved by Peel on April 15th, 1829, two days after George IV had signed the Catholic Emancipation Bill. Close on half a century had passed since the question of Catholic emancipation had seemed likely to lead, through the Gordon Riots, to police reform. Now, by a curious coincidence, a peaceful settlement of the Catholic claims was immediately followed by police

reform, and the centenaries of these two measures of emancipation, the one from political disabilities and the other from false notions of liberty, were celebrated in 1929.

The Police Bill passed through both Houses without opposition, receiving the Royal Assent on the 19th June, 1829. A new police office was established in Westminster at 4, Whitehall Place (with a back door in Scotland Yard) and was placed in charge of two justices of the peace, who were denominated Commissioners of Police and were confined to executive functions. They were given the task of organising a force of some three thousand constables, under superintendents, inspectors and sergeants. The new police replaced the Bow Street foot patrols and took over the duties of the parish constables and the night watchmen in the Metropolitan Police district, an area which, as at first constituted, was much the same as the present County of London. The Bow Street horse patrol, the river police and the police office constables remained for a few years longer outside the new establishment, and the City of London, as already explained, has kept its own force to this day.

The first thousand of Peel's new police began their patrol, in their blue tail-coats and top hats, on the evening of the 29th September, 1829, to be greeted by the populace, to whom a uniformed body of disciplined police were a novelty, as the "blue army," the "blue devils," the "raw lobster gang," and a few other choice epithets which temporarily concealed the affection which the Londoner was soon to develop for the "bobby," the "peeler," the "copper."

## Chapter II

### THE COMMISSIONER OF POLICE

#### *A Hundred Years of Scotland Yard*

THE appointment of Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis is among the most difficult upon which Ministers have to tender advice to the Crown, and the holder of it is perhaps more exposed to criticism and the vicissitudes of fortune than any other member of the public service. There has been much discussion of the character and history of the post and of the qualifications required for it. Questions have been raised as to the suitability of a military head for a civilian body, and as to the necessity of previous police experience for the successful discharge of the most difficult and responsible of all police posts. English practice has been contrasted with that of France, where it would be a thing unheard of to place a soldier in command of the police, although in many respects, as, for example, its association with the *Garde Républicaine* and the *Gendarmerie*, the French police system has military features entirely lacking in the English.

All these are matters in which the past can throw light on the present. There have been eleven Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis in a hundred years, all but three have been soldiers, all have been imported from outside the police service, and all have been chosen with reference to



the special needs of the moment. In this chapter it is proposed to give a brief retrospect of Scotland Yard from these points of view and to indicate some of the milestones in the force's journey from 1829 to 1929, during which time nearly one hundred and twenty thousand men have passed through its ranks.

"We ought to be crucified, if we make the measure a job and select our constables from the servants of our parliamentary friends." Thus Peel had written of the Irish Peace Preservation Act, 1814, which established a constabulary in the proclaimed districts of Ireland. He had found it hard to obtain any footing for his principles in the morass of Anglo-Irish corruption, but in the Metropolitan police he was determined that there should be no jobbery. "The chief danger of the failure of the new system," he told the Duke of Wellington, "will be if it is made a job, if gentlemen's servants and so forth are placed in the higher offices. I must frame regulations to guard against this as effectually as I can." He started by deciding that anyone who applied to be one of the new police justices would be *ipso facto* ineligible, a decision that ruled out most of the existing police court magistrates and led him to appoint two Irishmen who were entirely free from any association with the old police system. His first intention had been to have a Board of three justices, but he eventually decided on two, with an independent officer, the Receiver of Police, who was to be responsible for the receipt and expenditure of police moneys and all the property and supplies required for the new establishment.

The two men Peel selected were "a military man conversant with the details of the police system in Ireland" and "a sensible lawyer." The former was Colonel Rowan, afterwards Sir Charles Rowan, K.C.B., and the latter was Richard Mayne, afterwards Sir Richard Mayne, K.C.B. Rowan had fought under Wellington in the Peninsula and at Waterloo, and, after leaving the Army, was a police magistrate in Ireland. Mayne was a young barrister on the Northern Circuit, son of an Irish judge. The details of the new arrangements were worked out by them in conference with Peel in July, 1829, and one of the first suggestions which he approved was that they should be called Commissioners of Police\* to distinguish them from the magistrates at the other police offices. This

\* As will be gathered from Chapter I, this name was not invented in 1829. It is as old as the reign of Queen Anne. After the Union with Scotland, "Commissioners of Police," known also as "Lords of Police," were appointed to administer the internal affairs of that country. During the eighteenth century the Improvement Commissioners set up in various towns under local Acts were commonly known as Police Commissioners, because they looked after police matters, in the old sense of the word (lighting, scavenging, etc.). The first Improvement Commissioners were those established for London and Westminster in 1662, of whom Evelyn, the diarist, was one; their office was in Scotland Yard and they were known as "the Commissioners of Scotland Yard." Their duties included that of licensing the newly introduced hackney coaches. The chief officers of the police forces established by the Home Office at Birmingham, Manchester and Bolton in 1839 were known at first as Commissioners of Police, but they became Chief Constables when these forces were taken over by the local authority. The only other Commissioner of Police in England and Wales is now the Commissioner of the City of London Police.

designation was accordingly in use from the first, although it was not until 1839 that it became a statutory title. On the nice question of the relative position of the new Commissioners and the old police magistrates, Peel decided that the latter should call on the former to pay their respects and not *vice versa*. Against this, it would, perhaps, be fair to quote the opinion of the parliamentary Committee of 1838, that to dissociate the magistrates from the police would have the effect of elevating the former.

The men for the new force were selected from many thousands of applicants. The superintendents were nearly all old sergeant-majors from the Guards or the Cavalry, chosen for their powers of enforcing discipline. A good many of the inspectors had also been non-commissioned officers, and, as a result of special efforts to obtain men who had been disciplined in the Army, about a seventh of the rank and file were ex-soldiers. Except for the period immediately after the Great War, ex-soldiers never again formed so large a proportion of the recruits for the Metropolitan police.

Once the force had been formed, there was unswerving adherence to the rule laid down by Peel that the posts of superintendent, inspector and sergeant should be filled by promotion, a decision which was of cardinal importance, not merely because at the time it saved police efficiency from being sacrificed to political influence, but because it placed the new police system on a democratic basis of self-government. In the general instructions to constables first place was given to a

declaration that every constable might hope to rise by activity, intelligence and good conduct to these superior stations. This exclusion of jobbery is accepted as a matter of course to-day, but it was something of an innovation a hundred years ago. Lord Sidmouth, as Home Secretary, had been pilloried before the parliamentary Committee of 1818 for having interfered with the appointments of constables at the police offices in order to secure places for worthless nominees of his. It fell to Rowan and Mayne to uphold Peel's principles, not only against private pressure from highly-placed individuals anxious to find situations for "poor gentlemen" and others, but even against backsliding on the part of Peel's successors at the Home Office. Lord Melbourne was ready, for example, to allow a recommendation by a Countess to make up for a candidate's deficiencies in other respects.

The two Commissioners were on a footing of equality and had the right of independent communication with the Secretary of State. Colonel Rowan resided at the police office in 4, Whitehall Place, a circumstance which, coupled with his military rank and the fact that he was the older and more distinguished of the two, led to his being popularly regarded as the senior Commissioner and often referred to as "Chief Commissioner," a misnomer which still persists, although since 1855 "The Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis" has been sole Commissioner at Scotland Yard. Rowan and Mayne were sometimes differentiated as "the military Commissioner" and "the legal Commissioner." There would not appear to

have been any division of functions on this basis, but experience in command and a legal training were contributions which the two men brought respectively to their joint task. Rowan, for example, directed operations on such occasions as the Cold-bathfields riot in 1833, while Mayne's was the hand that drafted the general instructions to the force, setting out the principles of the new police system in words which it has never been necessary to alter. "The primary object of an efficient police is the prevention of crime; the next that of detection and punishment of offenders, if crime is committed. To these ends all the efforts of police must be directed. The protection of life and property, the preservation of public tranquillity, and the absence of crime will alone prove whether those efforts have been successful and whether the objects for which the police were appointed have been attained."

This dual commissionership of soldier and barrister worked smoothly and well for a period of twenty years, and it would be difficult to overpraise the achievement of the two men who presided over the new force in its first years. Their administration and example gave a lasting embodiment to the conception of police as a citizen body, servants not masters of the public, and to the ideals of courtesy, forbearance and helpfulness to all. Metropolitan police inspectors and sergeants were extensively employed in the 'thirties to establish new police forces elsewhere in England, and so the principles of Peel and his Commissioners were carried far and wide. Officers were even sent overseas to the

Dominions and Colonies, a missionary work similar to that which in recent years has been done by those who have helped to introduce British police methods into Greece and Poland.

On Rowan's retirement in January, 1850, he was succeeded by Captain Hay, who for ten years had been the inspecting or visiting superintendent\* of the Metropolitan police and had distinguished himself in that capacity at the time of the Chartist troubles in 1842 and 1848. Hay, like Rowan, had seen service in the Peninsular War and at Waterloo, and he had subsequently had some administrative experience in a military capacity in Canada. He was denominated Second Commissioner, and it was intended that he should be, to some extent, subordinate to Mayne. But there was no clear definition of their respective functions, and, after a year or two, their relations became difficult and were described by Mayne as "the jarring of undefined co-ordinate authority." It had been laid down that on all special occasions when the police were to be on duty in large bodies, the regulations were to be made and the orders given by Mayne. One such occasion was the Duke of Wellington's lying-in-state at Chelsea Hospital in November, 1852, when, owing to defective arrangements for regulating admission, the crowd got out of hand and two or three people were crushed to death. Feeling ran strong against the police, and Hay sought to improve the occasion

\* This post which was created in 1839, on the extension of the Metropolitan Police District to its present limits, disappeared when the Assistant Commissioners were created in 1856.

by arranging for the insertion in the newspapers of a paragraph informing the public that it was his colleague who had been responsible for the arrangements. A year later there was further trouble when Mayne found that Hay had submitted to the Home Office, without his knowledge, "proposals for a different mode of carrying on the police duties," details of which have not survived. Their subsequent estrangement may be inferred from the "don't know" and "don't care" style of Mayne's answers when he was questioned about his colleague (absent through illness) by the Royal Commission on the Hyde Park Sunday Observance riot of July 1st, 1855, which is further referred to below.

This unfortunate conflict between the two chiefs led to Mayne being given sole control after Hay's death in 1855\*, and his administration lasted to the end of 1868. This long commissionership of over thirty-nine years, stretching from the last year of George IV's reign almost to the Franco-German War, covered a period of great change. The police district had been enlarged to six times its original size; London and its population expanded at a rate previously undreamt of; the force increased from three thousand to nearly eight thousand, and the scope of their duties was greatly extended, but their organisation and methods underwent little alteration. Towards the end of this time there was a growing criticism of the police. Several reasons can be found for this. Whereas the Commissioners had in

\* The Metropolitan Police Act, 1856, substituted one Commissioner and two Assistant Commissioners for two Commissioners and an inspecting superintendent.

the early years been overwhelmed with applications to join the police, in the 'sixties there was difficulty in obtaining an adequate supply of good recruits. The pay had become less attractive as it gradually fell below the general level of industrial wages, and even below the rates of pay of some other forces, and there was discontent with regard to pension conditions and the long hours of duty. Crime, meanwhile, was causing alarm. The substitution, after 1850, of penal servitude and ticket-of-leave for transportation overseas, was followed by an increase in crimes of violence. Garroters made the streets of London unsafe at night. This return to something like pre-1829 conditions was partly the result of released convicts being under no proper supervision, and of the absence of any system for the registration and control of habitual criminals.

In 1866 the agitation over the Reform Bill of that year brought the police into conflict with the mob, the first serious clash since the Coldbath-fields riot of 1833. The *mêlée* by the Serpentine on the afternoon of Sunday, July 1st, 1855, between the police and the demonstrators against Lord Robert Grosvenor's Bill for enforcing Sunday observance on the lower orders had been in the nature of a comic relief to the anxieties of the Crimean War. The Royal Commission which inquired into it reported that, although a few individual policemen had used unnecessary violence, no bones had been broken and no one had been seriously hurt, nor had anything happened to shake the confidence of the public in the general good con-



duct and efficiency of the police. But the riot of July, 1866, which resulted from the prohibition of meetings in Hyde Park, was a regular battle. The Park railings were demolished, the Commissioner himself was wounded and the police so hard pressed that troops had to be called to their aid. This was the first case of military intervention in a civil disturbance in London since the establishment of the Metropolitan police. Then the Fenian campaign began, and the famous explosion at Clerkenwell in December, 1867\*, turned public criticism of the police into panic and a general Vote of No Confidence. Their organisation and methods were freely condemned as obsolete and as no match for the new developments in the opposing forces of crime and disorder, which seemed to be threatening the public safety.

Thus, when Sir Richard Mayne died at the end of 1868, the universal tributes to him as the man who above all others had established Peel's new system of police on a firm basis of success and popularity, were qualified by a general expectation of drastic changes and, in particular, of a reorganisation of the police on more military lines, and the introduction of a larger measure of "educated control."

As the old suspicions of the force as a "Blue Army" had died away (a change in public opinion which enabled the helmet to be adopted in place of the top hat in 1864), police organisation had begun to be contrasted unfavourably with that of the Army. It was pointed out that in numbers

\* See page 155.

the police were equivalent to a division and had fewer officers than a battalion. *The Times*, in reviewing Mayne's achievements and recent difficulties, described him as having been "continually in the field on active service, day and night, against a ubiquitous and restless foe" (the criminal) with "only two educated lieutenants" (the Assistant Commissioners). A Committee appointed after the Clerkenwell explosion to inquire into the organisation and management of the police recommended that the police divisions should be grouped in four districts under the command of Army officers, or persons of similar standing and qualifications. This recommendation took effect in 1869, in the introduction of four district officers, known at first as district superintendents.

It was these happenings that led an influential deputation, headed by a professor, to wait upon the Secretary of State (Mr. Bruce) and to urge the necessity of appointing, as Sir Richard Mayne's successor, a civilian who would "demilitarise" the force. Mr. Bruce replied that the force was not in the least military, though the men were occasionally drilled, and that he proposed to appoint as Commissioner a person "best acquainted with the habits of criminals, able to detect crime and protect the public peace." In justifying himself subsequently to the House of Commons for having appointed a soldier, he said that there might be civilians who could be trusted with the command of 10,000 men, but how was he to discover these Oliver Cromwells?

The first of the qualifications which Mr. Bruce claimed to have sought in his Commissioner, was

one which has not since been associated with the head of the police, but it was certainly possessed by Sir Richard Mayne's successor, Colonel Henderson, R.E., afterwards Sir Edmund Henderson, K.C.B. (Commissioner, 1869-1886). He had spent all except the first six years of his professional career on civil duties, and had had nearly twenty years experience of criminals in a convict settlement\* in Western Australia and of prison administration at the Home Office. He was very little of a military chief. One of his first steps was to allow the police to grow beards and to discard their uniform when off duty. His appointment was followed by many other more important changes, some of which had been initiated in Mayne's last year. There was a large increase in the strength of the police, which enabled the constables' beats to be shortened and the ambulatory policeman to be supplemented by the stationary one, fixed posts or points being established in isolated districts or disorderly neighbourhoods and at hackney carriage standings, to meet the public demand for more protection. The year 1869 also saw the creation of a detective force covering the whole district and the introduction of a system for dealing with habitual criminals.

While the public thus demanded more from the police, the latter began to ask that their conditions of service should be improved: 1872 was a year of

\* He had been Comptroller of Convicts in the new penal settlement established in 1850 in Western Australia, and from 1863 to 1869 director and Surveyor-General of Prisons at the Home Office, where he had the task of tightening up prison administration (not transferred from the local authorities to the State still 1876), and giving effect to the changes introduced by the Prisons Act, 1865.

many strikes in London, and, in the autumn, the contagion spread to the police, who had hitherto been regarded as models of respectful propriety. A monster meeting of constables was held at the Cannon Street Hotel (with a member of Parliament in the chair) at which grievances were discussed. This led to other meetings and the setting up of a representative Committee of delegates from all the divisions, to formulate their case for increased pay, better pensions and a reduction of the hours of day duty from nine to eight. The demands as regards pay and hours of duty were eventually conceded, but the pension question was not finally disposed of until 1890. There had been no threats by the men as to what they would do, if their grievances were not remedied, but the settlement arrived at was followed immediately by the first of the four "strikes" which have occurred in the Metropolitan police. The strike of November, 1872, and that of July, 1890, involved only handfuls of men and hardly deserved the name, if compared with the great police strike of August, 1918, when 6,203 men refused duty, or its aftermath of July, 1919, when 1,089 again answered the call of "The Police Union." All four, however, had this in common, that they were associated with attempts by the police to set up some form of Union, or representative body, which could negotiate on their behalf with the authorities.\*

The strike of November, 1872, which was limited to three stations and 180 men (who were dismissed but, with a few exceptions, subsequently reinstated),

\* See pages 53 and 293.

was a protest, on the spur of the moment, when the news went round that the constable who had acted as secretary to the Committee of delegates had been dismissed for insubordination. The Committee had received only temporary toleration from the authorities; the secretary wanted to convert it into a permanent institution and rebelled against an order placing an absolute prohibition on further committees and meetings. He was fifty years ahead of his time.

These signs of insubordination in the force greatly disturbed the public. Leaflets broadcast by other agitators informed them that this "revolution in the police" was to be followed by one in the Navy and the Army. *Punch* put the matter in a truer perspective with a cartoon representing a maid-servant locking an area gate against her old friend "the Bobby" and "a British cook" warning him off her kitchen. It also gave poetical expression to the general friendliness between police and public in the lines beginning,

"Oh, Bobby, my Bobby, the stay of the street  
Deemed truest of all my true blues."

Next year, 1873, the strike had its reaction in what the Home Secretary (Mr. Lowe) termed "a dead set against the police," the first of those periodical agitations in connection with arrests for disorderly or improper conduct in the Parks or Piccadilly.\* There were prolonged criticisms in Parliament and

\* The causes célèbres in 1873 were the arrest of a Mr. Belt, whose peculiarities of gait and manner were mistaken for drunkenness, and a fracas one night outside a notorious dancing saloon, the Argyll Rooms, between some constables and five officers of the

the Press of police high-handedness and illegalities, defects which were attributed to continuing lack of "educated control," and to the false idea that *esprit de corps* involved supporting one another through thick and thin and obtaining convictions at all costs. The remedy put forward in many quarters was that officers of good social standing and education, introduced from the Army or other professions, should replace superintendents (and even inspectors) promoted from the ranks. The agitation died away, and the only change made was the appointment of a legal adviser\* to the Commissioner, a step which was intended to restore to Scotland Yard something of Peel's original combination of soldier and barrister. The changes of 1869 had given the force seven superior officers, of whom five were soldiers and none lawyers, a "militarisation" which, however, was redressed by the appointments made between 1874 and 1884. Troubles in the detective police and the great "Scotland Yard scandal" of the Turf frauds case in 1877† led to the detective branch being reorganised in 1878 under a barrister, as the Criminal Investigation department, and in 1884 another barrister was appointed to take charge of the "civil

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Life Guards against whom the police unjustifiably and unsuccessfully brought charges of drunkenness and assault. *Punch's* comment (in the poem, "Ad Robertum misbehavientem") was rather more acid than that of 1872.

\* The post of legal adviser disappeared in 1887, after another barrister had been appointed Assistant Commissioner and it had been arranged for the well-known firm of police solicitors, Messrs. Wontner, to undertake legal work for the Commissioner and police prosecutions.

† See Chapter VII, page 157.

business" of Scotland Yard. Thus the administration and discipline of the force alone remained in the hands of a soldier Assistant Commissioner.

Sir Edmund Henderson's régime came to a sudden close.

On Monday, February 8th, 1886, rival meetings of the unemployed and the Social Democrats were held in Trafalgar Square and, as the crowds were beginning to disperse, a small mob of roughs, instead of returning to the East End, whence they came, moved off in a westerly direction. Finding themselves unattended by police, they rioted through the streets, stoning the clubs in Pall Mall and St. James's and later attacking shops in and around Oxford Street. It was a chance occurrence, which could not have been foreseen and of which little might have been heard, if a few mounted police (who were then employed almost exclusively in patrolling country districts) had been available, or if, in the message calling up the police reserves, the words "Pall Mall" had not, by another mischance, been corrupted into "the Mall." The result of this verbal confusion was that the reinforcements marched to the protection of Buckingham Palace and Marlborough House, which were in no danger, instead of pursuing the mob, who were eventually charged and dispersed in Oxford Street by a mere handful of men hurriedly collected by an energetic inspector. This "Black Monday" and the panic of the following Wednesday when, on the advice of Scotland Yard, there was a general closing and barricading of shops in the West End against an imaginary mob, who were supposed to be collecting

under cover of a dense fog, gave an even greater shock to public confidence in the police than the Clerkenwell explosion of 1867, the strike of 1872, the outcry of 1873, or the scandal in the detective branch of 1877.

Sir Edmund Henderson resigned, after what amounted to public censure by a newly appointed Home Secretary (Mr. Childers), and General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.M.G., another Royal Engineer officer, was summoned from a military command in Egypt to succeed him. The selection of a distinguished general would, it was thought, restore public confidence. A Committee, hurriedly appointed to inquire into the riot, had found that the chain of responsibility in the force and the distribution of duties among the superior officers were defective, and that it was "a matter of grave consideration whether the number of officers of superior rank and education or of experience in the habit of command was sufficient." A second Committee, of which Sir Charles Warren was a member, reported that the answer was in the negative: in other words, they considered it essential to modify the system under which most of the executive responsibility and the selection of men for the higher posts in the divisions rested with the superintendents, who had themselves been promoted from the ranks. This modification took the form of reviving district superintendents under the new name of Chief Constable. Of the four posts established in 1869 two had lapsed and the other two had hitherto been given no very definite duties.

Sir Charles Warren's tenure of the Commissioner-



ship has been regarded as a signal instance of the failure of a military administration of the Metropolitan police. His appointment was followed by those of five other Army officers as chief constables and assistant chief constables, but the selection of Army officers for such posts did not originate with him. The other important change in organisation for which he was responsible, was a large increase in the number of inspectors and sergeants, in order to improve supervision and discipline. The view of his Commissionership as a military régime rests, not so much on the influx of Army officers, or the fact that in his annual reports no reference was made to crime, although space was found for boots, saddlery, etc., but rather on what has been described as his "policy of military repression," in dealing with the unemployed riots during the winter of 1887-1888, and his impatience of "civilian" control or interference at the Home Office and Scotland Yard.

The year of the Queen's Jubilee and of the repeated riots in Trafalgar Square gave unusual openings for the display in police work of some of the qualities acquired in a military career, but it was also the year of the Cass case. Sir Charles Warren had to devote a large part of his time to inquiry into the circumstances of Miss Cass's arrest on a charge of soliciting in Regent Street, an arrest which had caused the defeat of the Government in the House of Commons.\* The case opened up the perennial question of the relations of police and women in the West End—a subject with which he was not so well qualified to deal. As regards the

\* See page 71.

riots, his brief communiqué in his report for 1887, where he stated that "during the autumn attempts were made by unruly mobs to riot in the streets and Trafalgar Square, which proceedings were successfully coped with by the police," may be contrasted with the Home Secretary's statement in Parliament that the riots had "exhausted the police and terrified the public." "Black Monday" of February 8th, 1886, was followed by "Bloody Sunday" of November 13th, 1887, when there was a prolonged struggle between the unemployed and the police in the Square and the adjoining streets, and the Life Guards had to be called out. The question of the right to hold public meetings in the Square became a political issue, eventually settled by the present regulations which allow meetings to be held subject to notice being given to the Commissioner. Sir Charles Warren came in for severe criticism for "military high-handedness" in attempting to prohibit them.

With the Home Secretary (Mr. Matthews) and the Home Office, Sir Charles was in constant disagreement. He resented any intervention by the permanent staff of the Home Office in Metropolitan police administration, and when eventually he took up the standpoint that the Secretary of State could not issue orders to the force there was no alternative but to accept his resignation.\* Inside Scotland Yard there was trouble over the independent financial administration of the Receiver, and as to the extent to which the free hand that Sir Charles was always

\* This followed on the publication of his article in *Murray's Magazine* for November, 1888 (see next page), criticising the Secretary of State and the Government.

claiming for himself was to be allowed to the Assistant Commissioner in charge of the C.I.D., which had been almost an independent department under Sir E. Henderson. The Assistant Commissioner (Mr. Monro) resigned in October, 1888, because he found it impossible to work with his chief.

In his article in *Murray's Magazine*, in connection with which he refused to admit the Secretary of State's right to apply the regulations under the Official Secrets Act to the Commissioner of Police or to any member of the police force, Sir Charles Warren denied that there had been any attempt during his Commissionership to make soldiers of the police. He pointed out that the attributes and qualifications aimed at were only "those which appertain to the soldier, sailor, postman, railway guard, or, in fact, to any citizen who joins an organised force. . . ." "The great object of the superior officers has been to keep well in view the fact that constables are citizens acting among and assisted by their fellow-townsmen, and there are probably no persons in this country who have a better knowledge of their position, duties, and obligations as citizens than officers who have served in the Army." The truth of his general proposition is undeniable, and his enunciation of it shows that this military Commissioner subscribed fully to the idea of police as a citizen body.

In 1888 "Jack the Ripper" caused crime to take the place of disorder, as the mutual preoccupation of police and public. Great importance also attached about this time to that side of police work which is

represented by the Special Branch of the C.I.D., then recently formed to deal with secret conspiracies and dynamite plots. It was, therefore, not surprising that Sir Charles Warren's place was filled by the return of Mr. Monroe,\* an expert on crime and the creator of the Special Branch. His brief term of office as Commissioner (December, 1888 to June, 1890) was marked by a continuance of industrial troubles in London (in particular the great Dock Strike of 1889) which were handled by the police more successfully than under Sir Charles Warren. But Mr. Monroe was almost as much in conflict with the Secretary of State (Mr. Matthews was still in office), as Sir Charles Warren. The questions at issue were improvements in pay and pension and the necessity for a large increase of the force to deal with crime and disorder—a matter on which Mr. Monroe took an unnecessarily alarmist view, as the period 1880 to 1900 proved to be one during which there was an almost continuous decrease in crime. All three questions were in the end settled satisfactorily, but Mr. Monroe was impatient and unfortunately allowed his sympathy with the men's claims to drive him into unnecessary antagonism to his parliamentary chief, even to the extent of enlisting the Press against the Secretary of State. He eventually resigned in June, 1890, mainly because he thought that the Pensions Bill which the Secretary of State was about to introduce into Parliament did not meet the just claims of

\* Mr. Monroe had succeeded Mr. Howard Vincent as Assistant Commissioner in charge of the C.I.D. in 1884, after 27 years in the Civil Service of Bengal where he was for a time Inspector-General of Police.

the men.\* But in the end the Police Act, 1890, made the most liberal provision as regards pensions. After his somewhat quixotic departure from Scotland Yard, Mr. Monro returned to India and devoted the rest of his active life to founding and carrying on a medical mission in Bengal.

The line taken by Mr. Monro and the discontent of the police over pay and pensions resulted in a situation which clearly called for a disciplinarian rather than a crime expert, and so a soldier was again called in, Colonel Sir Edward Bradford. The new Commissioner was a distinguished Indian Army officer. Like Sir E. Henderson, however, he was chosen for his administrative rather than his military experience. He came to Scotland Yard from the India Office where for over three years he had been in charge of the Political and Secret department, and he had previously held political appointments in India. Sir Edward Bradford combined military firmness with infinite tact and diplomacy. The first quality was shown in his handling of the police strike of 1890. Attempts to hold meetings to press the men's case for improved pay and pensions, and to negotiate with the authorities through a Committee of delegates, as in 1872, had been banned both by Mr. Monro and Sir E. Bradford. Disregard of these orders led to disciplinary action against the secretary to the Committee, and the circumstances of the

\* He also intended his resignation as a protest against the Secretary of State's private secretary who had no police, military or legal training, becoming an Assistant Commissioner, but no such appointment was made, the post being given to Mr. Monro's own nominee.

1872 strike were further paralleled when protest against this action took the form of a strike at Bow Street; but, on this occasion, it was thought necessary to call out the Life Guards to disperse the mob, who had gathered round Bow Street in sympathy with the strikers. The strikers were summarily dismissed, and discipline and contentment restored to the force by an increase in pay (the first since the police strike of 1872) as well as by the new pension privileges under the Police Act, 1890, the two improvements in conditions of service for which Mr. Monro had fought and resigned.

The thirteen years of Sir Edward Bradford's very successful Commissionership (1890-1903) may be described as a quiet period during which the police and public were recuperating after severe trials, and the police finances were recovering from the strain involved by the heavy augmentations to the force in the eighties. The peace of the Diamond Jubilee of 1897 was in contrast to the storminess of 1887. Attention was largely concentrated on improvements in methods of dealing with crime and habitual criminals and, partly as a result of the increased efficiency of the police, crime reached a low watermark in 1899. In 1901 Mr. Edward Henry was brought to Scotland Yard, as Assistant Commissioner in charge of the C.I.D., to inaugurate the finger-print system. Mr. Henry (subsequently Sir Edward Henry, Bart.), was an Indian civilian who had been Commissioner of Police in Johannesburg and previously (like Mr. Monro) Inspector-General of Police in Bengal, where he had established the finger-print system on a sound method of classification. In

1903 he succeeded Sir Edward Bradford as Commissioner. Sir Edward Henry brought to Scotland Yard not only the training and administrative experience of an Indian civil servant, but an unusually wide knowledge of police problems, and, during the seventeen years that he was the presiding genius (1901-1918), the force underwent the most rapid development it has known and attained a very high standard of efficiency. The years before the War were a period of great stress for the Metropolitan police, but, under Sir Edward Henry's guidance, they surmounted all difficulties with conspicuous success.

In 1906 the D'Angely case, with its allegations of wrongful arrest and of perjury, reopened the question of the conduct of the police in regard to street offences, and led to the appointment of a Royal Commission which, after two years' inquiry into police methods and into many charges of corruption and bribery, gave a verdict entirely favourable to the Metropolitan police as a body. In 1910-1914 there was a great deal of "strike duty," and Scotland Yard had on several occasions to send large contingents of men to reinforce the local police in South Wales, Lancashire and elsewhere. The great sensations of these years were the battles between police and alien desperadoes at Tottenham and Sidney Street, but the most difficult problem was provided by the suffragettes, perhaps the most harassing type of "criminal" with whom the police have ever been confronted. Then came the War and all the strain and complications of air raids, spies, restrictions on aliens, the Defence of the

Realm Regulations and, finally, the disastrous police strike of 1918 which caused Sir Edward Henry's resignation.

The strike of 1918 has been represented as a step to which the police were driven because their repeated demands for increased pay, to meet the increased cost of living due to the War, were ignored or rejected by the Commissioner and the Home Office. The facts are rather different. As the Home Secretary (Sir George Cave) explained in the House of Commons shortly after the strike, there had been no such series of neglected demands. The strike occurred while the Commissioner was absent in Ireland, and it began the day after certain demands had been submitted by the Police Union, with a request that they should be conceded within twenty-four hours. The pay of the Metropolitan police was gradually augmented during the War years by a series of allowances to meet the increased cost of living, and (as the men were informed before they came out on strike), a permanent increase of pay was under consideration, but its announcement had been delayed pending completion of a scheme for widows' pensions. The Police Union, which engineered the strike, was a new form of old attempts to establish within the police force a committee of the men, and even of outsiders, which could negotiate with the Commissioner, or the Home Office, after the manner of an industrial Union negotiating with employers. The Police Union's constitution and its claims on those who joined it were inconsistent with the maintenance of discipline and aimed at introducing an impossible dual allegiance. It



had, therefore, been outlawed by the authorities, and its organisers wished to gain the support of the men and compel recognition by means of a sudden and successful strike for a large increase of pay. At the same time, it has to be admitted that the Union and its supporters could not have thus prevailed upon over six thousand police officers to forget their oath, and to desert their posts in the crisis of the War, if the force had been in a contented state. The strike must, therefore, be regarded as proof that the time was already over-ripe for great changes in the conditions of service.

As in 1886 and 1890, the Government had recourse, in September, 1918, to the appointment of a soldier as Commissioner. Sir Edward Henry was followed by General Sir Nevil Macready, who had a long record of distinguished service in the administrative branches of the Army and, before the War, had more than once been in command of joint forces of Metropolitan police and soldiers during the industrial troubles in South Wales and other areas. The morale and discipline of the police were gradually re-established, a process which was facilitated by the Government's adoption of the recommendations of the Desborough Committee, appointed early in 1919 to make a general inquiry into the police of England and Wales. Large increases in pay were accompanied by a standardisation of the conditions and rules of service, and the demand for a representative body, in the place of the Police Union, was met, under the Police Act, 1919, by the establishment of the Police Federation (with Branch Boards in every force for each of the ranks of inspector, ser-

geant and constable) through which the police could bring forward any matters affecting their welfare and efficiency, other than questions of discipline and promotion relating to individuals. Firm action was taken in repressing the strike of July, 1919, the dying effort of the discredited Police Union, which the Police Bill then before Parliament was to make it illegal for the police to join. In April, 1920, Sir Nevil Macready, on taking up command in Ireland, was succeeded by Brigadier-General Horwood, who had been Provost-Marshal of the Armies in France during the War and before that Chief Officer of the North-Eastern Railway police. In November, 1928, Sir William Horwood gave place to Lord Byng of Vimy, the eleventh Commissioner of Police, and thus Scotland Yard, which began under Colonel Rowan, who had led a wing at Waterloo, completes its hundredth year under a general who commanded an Army in the Great War.

In conclusion, this retrospect suggests that the ideal Commissioner should be a compound of the soldier, the magistrate, the lawyer, the policeman, the detective and the civil servant, and that military officers have so often been chosen as Commissioners\* not with any idea of militarising the police but because in them was to be found administrative capacity coupled with experience in control of a disciplined body. Most of the soldiers who have been appointed to the post had exchanged the Army for civil life before coming to Scotland Yard, and

\* It should be noted that the barrister and the two Indian civilians who have been Commissioners have together held office for longer than seven military Commissioners.

in other cases all active connection with the Army was severed on appointment. The head of the Metropolitan police is a commissioned officer, but the commission he receives from the King is that of a justice of the peace, the constitutional and traditional representative of the civil power.

It is no reflection on the force that they have not hitherto produced a Commissioner, or more than one Assistant Commissioner (Sir James Olive) from their own ranks. It may be attributed rather to the fact that experience in the ranks and in subordinate positions has been the only method of qualifying for higher posts. There is no Police Staff College where a more extended training could be given and a wider outlook acquired than is to be expected of those who have to rise slowly through the various grades of constable and the ordinary routine of police duty. Many of the abler men in a force like the Metropolitan police naturally gravitate to the C.I.D., where the work calls for special intelligence and capacity but does not afford an all-round training in police administration. It is a criticism often directed against the English police service that there has been no provision (as in the old Royal Irish Constabulary and the Indian Police) for drawing young men from the educated and professional classes and training them in the police service itself for the higher posts.

Under existing conditions it should, therefore, cause no surprise that the Commissioner's post has been filled otherwise than by promotion, or that it has been successfully so filled. Expert knowledge of police matters is the province of his subordinates ;

the Commissioner has to hold the scales between police and public and between different branches of the police, a task which has, it is true, to be discharged by heads of other forces, but in his case is of such magnitude and delicacy, and requires such a varied knowledge of men and affairs, that it can well be undertaken by one who has had the opportunity of acquiring the exceptional qualifications necessary in some wider sphere than that of the police service.\*

\* The Royal Commission on the Police (1928-29) express the opinion that long experience and good service in the lower ranks are not the only, nor even the most important, qualifications for the higher posts. "It would be inimical," they say, "to the public interest to limit appointments to the higher posts to those who had entered the police as constables. Such posts should be filled by the best men available, irrespective of the source whence they are drawn."

## Chapter III

### STATE CONTROL OF THE METROPOLITAN POLICE

*The Home Secretary as Police Authority—The House of Commons and the Police—The Home Secretary and the Commissioner*

THE Metropolitan police are the one exception\* to the principle of local control which characterises the police system of Great Britain and places it in sharp contrast to the State-controlled systems of France, Germany and Italy. Everywhere outside of Greater London the police are administered by a local authority, known as "the police authority." In the counties the police authority is the Standing Joint Committee, constituted equally from the Justices in Quarter Sessions and the County Council. In the boroughs it is the Watch Committee of the Town Council. The Metropolitan police force is under the control of the Home Secretary, and its principal officers are responsible to him and are appointed by the Crown on his recommendation.

The exceptional position of the Metropolitan police originated in circumstances differing somewhat from those which have justified its continuance. The arrangement was not influenced by, and has never been defended with reference to any political

\* Disregarding special police forces, namely, the Railway Police who are servants of the Railway Companies, the London Docks Police who come under a special statutory body (the Port of London Authority) and the similar Manchester Docks and River Tyne Police Forces.

theory, such, for instance, as the idea that the police are the most absolute expression of the will of the State and must, therefore, be under its direct control—an idea ingrained in the Prussian system since the time of Frederick the Great, who established a State Police Director for Berlin in 1742. Nor, though its effect was perhaps analogous, was the arrangement made for such political reasons as influenced Napoleon in creating a special Prefecture of Police for Paris in 1800, so bringing the police of the French capital and its neighbourhood under an even closer form of government control than the police of the provinces. The Duke of Wellington's Ministry were, it is true, accused in some quarters of being disciples of Napoleon and of undertaking police reform as a means of checking revolutionary movements.\* The Metropolitan police certainly saved London from such disastrous experiences as the Reform Bill riots of 1831 at Bristol and elsewhere; and in 1833, when Parliament agreed to charge part of the cost of the police to the Exchequer, one of the arguments adduced by the Government was the national importance of maintaining order in the Metropolis. At the time of the Chartist disturbances of 1842, we find Sir James Graham, the Home Secretary, writing to Peel (as Prime Minister) "We have had a quiet night in London, and the suppression of the tumults here has had a magical effect in calming Merthyr Tydfil, and in allaying the excitement in distant quarters which waited for

\* "Gathering its theories in foreign parts it is not only ravished with the Code Napoleon, but it must have its Napoleon Police, its Napoleon Magistrates." (*Blackwood's Magazine*, Jan., 1831.)

a signal from the Metropolis." "All quiet in London" has had a calming effect on the provinces in more than one crisis since 1842. But these cannot be classed as political uses of the police, and it is beyond doubt that the only objects Peel and Wellington had in view when they asked Parliament to pass the Metropolitan Police Bill, 1829, were the prevention of crime and the ordinary maintenance of law and order in London for the protection of the public.\* If police reform had been inspired by any political or reactionary motive, it would have been carried through earlier, in the days of "Oliver the Spy" and the Six Acts, by Lord Sidmouth rather than by Peel.

The prime necessity a hundred years ago was the introduction of unity, order and efficiency into the confusion and helplessness of the numerous petty police jurisdictions in the Metropolitan area. A certain measure of this could have been secured by grouping the parishes in divisions and placing all the constables and watchmen under the divisional justices: alternatively, the Bow Street magistrates, who were under the Home Office, and already had executive control of such embryo police forces as the runners and patrols, might have been given a general superintendence of the parochial police. But neither of these expedients could have met the need for thorough reform of the old system, nor

\* The Metropolitan police were employed occasionally in their early years to maintain order outside the Metropolis—notably in 1835, when they were sent to various places in the southern counties to deal with the rural rebellions against the new Poor Law, which were thus saved from the military intervention and savage punishments that characterised the "Peasants' Revolt" of 1830.

have achieved that separation of judicial and executive police functions which was part of Peel's scheme. Under the old system the magistrates at Bow Street and the other police offices or courts were, as already mentioned, police officers as well as magistrates. Their executive functions were mainly of a detective kind ; they not only issued the warrant of arrest but saw to the necessary inquiries by their own constables, after which they examined the prisoner, usually in the spirit of a prosecutor, and committed him for trial. The work of criminal investigation was then part of the judicial system, just as it is to-day in France, and the old-style police magistrate in London was something like the *juge d'instruction*, or examining magistrate, of French criminal procedure.

When the separation of the policeman from the magistrate was brought about in 1829 by setting up a new police office which was to be entirely executive, there were no local authorities to challenge Home Office control of the police, so the new police office, like the older ones, necessarily came under the Home Office, as the Department responsible for the maintenance of law and order, as well as for the administration of justice in criminal matters.

The success of the Metropolitan police encouraged the idea of a State-controlled police for the whole country. It is on record that in July, 1829, Peel told the newly appointed Commissioners of Police that their office might develop into "a sort of Ministry of Police," by which he meant that it was an experiment and might become the headquarters of a national system. The Municipal Corporations Act of 1835 placed the new borough constabularies



under the unfettered local control of Watch Committees of the Town Councils. In 1839, however, the Royal Commission appointed in 1836 to consider the best means of establishing a rural constabulary, recommended that the counties of England and Wales should be policed by a force, estimated at a total of 8,000 (or about 1 to every 2,000 of the population), appointed, organised and managed by the Commissioners of the Metropolitan police, who would assign contingents to the different localities for employment under the orders of the justices in Quarter Sessions. The two principal members of this Commission were Mr. Chadwick, Secretary of the new Poor Law Commissioners, who had been materially assisted by the Metropolitan police in 1835, and Colonel Rowan, one of the two Commissioners of Police. They were, perhaps, unduly impressed with the advantages of extending the Metropolitan police organisation all over the country and drawing on this "reservoir of trained men" for other forces. They also founded their recommendations upon the consideration that the constitutional principle of the administration of justice was that of central control. Their scheme, which might have resulted in something similar to the French system of centrally appointed police officers working under some degree of local control, met with the strongest opposition. The proposed force was denounced in Parliament and in the Press as "a State *gendarmérie*," "a militia in blue coats," "an Army in round hats," a revival of some of the cries which had greeted the advent of the Metropolitan police ten years earlier. All that was done in 1839 was to enlarge the Metropolitan Police

district to its present limits and to apply a certain measure of central control to the new county constabularies authorised by the County Police Act, 1839.

State control or nationalisation of the police has often been urged since 1839, as, for example, in the debate in the House of Commons on the Metropolitan police in May, 1873, when the Home Secretary (Mr. Bruce) said that it was an idea from which he "shrank with something like horror." Nationalisation was considered by the Desborough Committee in 1919 and rejected by them as inconsistent with the constitutional principle that the preservation of law and order is primarily the function of the local authorities. They also accepted the view that it would prejudice those intimate relations between the police and the locality they serve, which contribute in so large a measure to police popularity in this country.

The Home Secretary has nowadays a considerable jurisdiction with regard to the police service of England and Wales (the Secretary of State for Scotland having a similar jurisdiction in Scotland). The conditions of service (pay, discipline, promotion, clothing, etc.), are the subject of a comprehensive code of regulations made by him under the Police Act, 1919, and he has had, since 1856, the power of enforcing, through the Inspectors of Constabulary, a standard of efficiency in numbers and discipline. He also issues general instructions or advice, as occasion may require, and the police department of the Home Office is in close touch with the local police authorities and chief constables. But, subject to the maintenance of proper strengths, organisation

and general efficiency, the Home Office does not intervene in the executive sphere, or assume any responsibility with regard to the actions of the provincial police—that is a matter for each police authority. Local autonomy remains the accepted principle of the English police system. This may best be appreciated by contrasting the English system with that of France, or Prussia, or Italy.

In France the whole of the provincial police are under the control of the *Sûreté Générale* department of the Ministry of the Interior and of the local Prefects, who represent the central government, and they are reinforced by a State detective service and a military organisation (the *Gendarmerie*). In Prussia there is a State police administration for the larger towns and a State *gendarmerie* (*Landjägerie*) for the country, and a State criminal police force for the provinces generally. In Italy the police consists of the *Carabinieri* and the Corps of agents of public safety, both State organisations of a military or semi-military character. In England and Wales the difference of system is and seems likely to remain fundamental. It is true that Scotland Yard has certain national functions in the matter of criminal records and that the services of its detectives are occasionally lent to other police forces for the investigation of murders or other serious crimes: some of the work of the Special Branch of the C.I.D. is of a national character, and its officers are stationed at provincial ports; but these are merely the applications of local or special resources to national purposes, or for mutual aid, and the principle of

the system is that each force has a local jurisdiction and is under local control.

In the Metropolitan police district the Home Secretary combines the functions of central authority and local police authority. To the Home Secretary, as central authority, the Metropolitan police force is only one out of the 182 forces\* of England and Wales, though far the largest and most important of them all : in dealing with the many matters affecting the police service as a whole, he has to consider and take account of the circumstances and requirements of all forces, Metropolitan, County and Borough. As the police authority for the Metropolitan Police district, he is personally and directly responsible for the administration of the Metropolitan force, and, through the police division of the Home Office and the Receiver of Police, controls Metropolitan police expenditure. In so doing, he also performs a double function, in safeguarding the interests both of the national Treasury and of the London ratepayers.

As local government developed in the Metropolitan area in the second half of the nineteenth century, not only were the police gradually relieved by the new local authorities of functions in regard to health and public safety which they had previously exercised, but a demand arose that the police themselves should again be placed under local control. This demand was based on the accepted position of the police as a local service and on the need for popular control of police activities. It was also put forward in the interests of economy, when the

\* Comprising 60 County forces, 121 City and Borough forces and the City of London police.

growth in Metropolitan police expenditure between 1870 and 1890 (owing, mainly, to large additions to the force) became a frequent subject of criticism in Parliament and among local authorities. After the establishment of the London County Council in 1888 there was a considerable movement in support of the Council's claim to add the police to their other responsibilities, but local control of the Metropolitan police can hardly be said at any time to have entered the region of practical politics. Whenever a charge or complaint against the Metropolitan police is the subject of general discussion, there are those who seize upon the case as an argument for local control; on the other hand, when troubles arise in the provincial police, the partisans of State control of the police urge that system as the only guarantee of efficiency and purity of administration.

The principal criticism urged against the present control of the Metropolitan police is that their administration is in the hands of those who are not accountable to any popularly elected body representative of London, and it is likely that there always will be a demand that the ratepayers of London should have the management of their police, no less than the ratepayers of Liverpool, Birmingham or Edinburgh. This demand could not be met by the simple expedient of substituting the London County Council for the Secretary of State, as the County of London includes only about a sixth of the Metropolitan police district. Unless the police district were to become the area of a single local authority, by enlargement of the County of London or other-

wise, the introduction of local control of police in the Metropolitan police district, on the same basis as elsewhere, would involve apportioning the force among nine county and county borough councils, a step which could hardly be regarded as in the direction of increased efficiency.

Is government control of the Metropolitan police to be condemned as undemocratic? If so, it has a parallel in the country which claims to be the most democratic in the world. In the United States of America, where it sometimes seems as if all other considerations were subordinated to local independence and the sacrosanct elective principle, the police of Washington and of the State of Columbia are under the Federal Government. It would be difficult to find any country which has not placed the police of its capital under government control. If the Metropolitan police were under local control, they could not be entrusted with their present imperial and national functions, and it is usually recognised that, if the police were to become a municipal service in London, there would have to be also a government force under the Home Secretary for the police functions connected with the Sovereign, the Imperial Government, the Royal Palaces, the Houses of Parliament, etc., and for much of the work of the C.I.D. In the absence of such a special force (a costly expedient), recourse would inevitably be had to military protection. This is what is done abroad and was done in this country before the creation of the Metropolitan police.

But the democratic character of Government control can be sustained without appeal to the

practice of foreign countries. Government control means House of Commons control. "I am the servant of the House of Commons," said the Home Secretary (Sir William Joynson-Hicks), in the debate on the Savidge case on July 20th, 1928, "and every action I take, every decision I come to in regard to the police can be brought up and discussed here." Any act of the Commissioner, or of his subordinates, down to the latest joined constable, can similarly be brought under the scrutiny of the House of Commons. In the case of other police forces in England and Wales, the Home Secretary can be challenged in Parliament, with regard to the matters of general principle for which he is responsible, but he is not answerable to the House of Commons for their administration or conduct, as he is for those of the Metropolitan police.

Parliamentary control of the Metropolitan police may be said to have been inbred from the beginning. When the force was born a hundred years ago, its coming had been prepared for by seven parliamentary committees of inquiry, and it was destined to be the subject of four more in the first eight years of its existence. This parliamentary supervision has never relaxed. The Savidge case of 1928 and the appointment of Lord Byng of Vimy as Commissioner are only the most recent of a long series of occasions on which the Home Secretary has been arraigned in Parliament with respect to the administration of the force and the conduct of individual members of it.

It is fitting that the police force which protects Parliament, the Government and the capital of the

Empire, and may be said to exemplify the British police system to the world, should be readily amenable to national criticism through the channel of Parliament. As an arena for the public discussion of police questions, the County Hall (or other meeting place of a local authority), can hardly stand comparison with the chamber of the House of Commons. No other country has devised a more effective check on the policy or general conduct of the police. If cause for dissatisfaction with the Metropolitan police arises, the matter is not relegated to an administrative or secret tribunal: it is the subject of Parliamentary question or debate, with the not infrequent sequel of a public inquiry by a Royal Commission or a Committee, or some other independent tribunal. Police administration and the policy of Scotland Yard are thus brought before the bar of publicity, a course which helps to maintain or restore confidence in the police, and to keep their methods in touch with public opinion. The present system of control of the Metropolitan police could hardly have stood for so long and with so little challenge had it not been tempered by what may be called the Vigilance Committee work of the House of Commons, and by periodical inquests into police methods through Commissions and Committees.

It cannot, however, be overlooked that House of Commons control has the defects of its virtues. The House has been described as the most public place in the world, and, like any large assembly, it may be swayed by emotion. It is, therefore, not always the most suitable place for the discussion



of police matters, which may need judicial examination, and even *in camera* treatment, if the full facts are to be elicited. If a complaint or charge against the police is brought up in the House of Commons, the case tends *ipso facto* to become "a police scandal," and is, in consequence, subjected to what has been described as "intensive treatment" in the Press. This leads to its being made the basis of a great deal of ill-informed criticism and general denunciations of the police, which leave the public suspicious, the police discouraged, and the wrongdoer *tertius gaudens*.

The official spokesman for the police in the House of Commons, the Home Secretary, has to hold the scales even between police and public, and, although he may be furnished with a brief for the police, cannot speak with the police alone in view, like other Ministers defending their departments. As Sir William Joynson-Hicks had occasion to explain, in the course of the debate on the Savidge inquiry (August 17th, 1928), his responsibility for the administration of the Metropolitan police requires him to support them and stand up for them, unless he is satisfied that they have done wrong, but he is also trustee of the interests of the public. He must, therefore, avoid all suspicion of "whitewashing" the police, and his championship of them must at times take the form of agreeing to refer the matter to an independent tribunal, preserving judicial impartiality in the meanwhile, an attitude which may be misunderstood by the police as well as by the public.

In the Savidge case the defence of the police had to be left to the counsel representing them at the

inquiry held by a Judge and two members of Parliament, but counsel's advocacy cannot carry the same weight with the public or be as satisfactory to the police as a whole-hearted defence by a Minister in the House of Commons.

Moreover, it is always much easier to shake confidence than to restore it, and the result of any inquiry into "a police scandal," however favourable to the police, can hardly ever, in the nature of things, restore the *status quo*, for by the time the truth has emerged the whole matter has lost much, if not all, of its news value. Thus the famous Cass case of Jubilee night, 1887, which led to the defeat of the Government in the House of Commons, is remembered as a false charge by a police constable against a respectable lady taking a late but harmless walk in Regent Street: the little-known and never-mentioned sequel was that the constable concerned, after an inquiry by the Commissioner of Police and a prosecution for perjury, was eventually acquitted of any wrongful act and honourably reinstated in the force.

The interest of the House of Commons in the Metropolitan police is not confined to sensational cases in which the liberty of the subject is involved, or to the actions of the handful of men who are employed in Hyde Park and Piccadilly; it ranges over the whole field of police administration, and the pages of the "Official Reports" bear almost daily witness to the attention that Parliament pays to Scotland Yard and all its doings. There are over a hundred members whose constituencies lie wholly or in part within the Metropolitan police district, but all members are Londoners for a great part of

the year, and the conduct and welfare of the London police are matters of concern to all. If the police and those who appreciate the difficulties of their task are sometimes tempted to think that they receive too much attention from Parliament and the Press, they at least realise that the House of Commons can be trusted to do eventual justice to the police as well as the public, and that Parliamentary pressure on Home Secretaries and Governments has played a large part in securing for the police their present conditions of service.

The nature of the Home Secretary's relationship to the Commissioner has been dealt with in the volume on the Home Office in this series. Sir William Harcourt described it as that of "confidential colleagues acting together in discharging a very responsible public duty," and their respective spheres as "the general policy of the police" and "the detailed management of the force." It would be impracticable nowadays for the Home Secretary to concern himself with the latter as closely as in the days when Police Orders contained announcements such as that for January 1st, 1830: "The Commissioners of Police feeling anxious to provide all the comforts for the police force that can be given consistently with the nature of the duties to be performed, are glad to have to communicate to the constables that Mr. Secretary Peel has allowed another blanket to be issued."\*

\* Peel seems to have been peculiarly solicitous that his charges should be kept warm. Miss Ramsay, in her recent *Life of Peel*, records how he wrote on his own initiative to order two pairs of woollen drawers for every convict on the voyage to Australia.

The Commissioner is, however, subject to the directions of the Secretary of State in the execution of all his duties. All police orders and regulations of a general character require the Secretary of State's approval, and his decision is sought on any matters that raise questions of policy, particularly if they affect the relations between police and public, or are likely to have other reactions which may lead to the Minister being questioned in the House of Commons or otherwise made the target for criticism of police action. As regards the actual administration of the force, and the maintenance of discipline, the Secretary of State's sphere is to prescribe and enforce certain general principles: for the application of them to individual cases the Commissioner has a final responsibility, subject only to his general accountability to the Home Secretary, as the Police Authority of the force, and, in matters of discipline, to the right of appeal to the Secretary of State allowed by the Police (Appeals) Act, 1927, in cases of dismissal or compulsory resignation from the force.

In his control of the Metropolitan police, as in other matters, the Secretary of State, while constantly in personal consultation with the Commissioner, acts through the channel and with the advice of the permanent officials of the Home Office. This Sir Charles Warren refused to recognise, insisting that his relationship to the Home Secretary must be a purely personal one—a difficult, if not an impossible, position for a Minister called upon to defend the police in Parliament. There must necessarily be some continuous responsibility for

Metropolitan police administration, unbroken by the changes and chances to which Commissioners as well as Home Secretaries are subject, and this responsibility must rest with the permanent staff of the Home Office.

In the course of a hundred years there have been thirty-four Secretaries of State and eleven Commissioners. Except for the agitated period, 1886-1890, when three Commissioners (Sir Edmund Henderson, Sir Charles Warren and Mr. Monro) resigned in close succession, Secretaries of State and Commissioners have worked together in loyal co-operation and mutual confidence, and it is worthy of note that, when Sir Edward Henry resigned, on the occasion of the police strike of 1918, the Home Secretary (Sir George Cave) showed his sense of their joint trusteeship by tendering his own resignation.

## Chapter IV

### THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT

#### *Growth and Distribution of the Force*

THE police districts of England and Wales are, in general, counties (administrative or geographical) and cities or boroughs. In a few cases one Chief Constable is in command of two county forces, and smaller boroughs are included in county police districts, but, apart from these cases, the only composite police district is the Metropolitan, which includes two whole counties (London and Middlesex), parts of four others (Surrey, Essex, Kent and Hertford) and forty-two boroughs, three of which (Croydon, West Ham and East Ham) are county boroughs. It owes the wide extent of its territory partly to the circumstance that, when it was constituted in 1829 and enlarged in 1840, there were no local authorities or police to dispute control of the area, except the discredited parish vestries and parish constables.

In 1826 Peel had thought of taking a radius of ten miles from St. Paul's for his new police district. "I consider," he said, "the whole of the district within the range of this circumference (excepting the City of London with which I should be afraid to meddle) as one great city." To us this is rather a description of what it has since become than of

what it then was. In 1829 London, strictly so called, ended at Hyde Park in the West, "The Angel" at Islington in the North, Whitechapel in the East and Kennington Oval and "The Elephant and Castle" in the South. But Peel saw that it was essential to include enough of the vicinity of London to prevent criminals from being merely driven from the Metropolis to the suburbs or outlying villages. The district actually formed in 1829 had a radius varying from four to seven miles from Charing Cross, and, as already mentioned, included very much what the present County of London comprises. Its limits were approximately those of the Bow Street foot patrols, and the enlargement of the district in 1840 brought it to the furthest points of the horse patrol—fifteen or sixteen miles from Charing Cross.

The Metropolitan police district has an area of just under 700 square miles,\* including the river Thames, which is within the jurisdiction of the Metropolitan police between Dartford and Barking Creeks seawards and Teddington Lock up-stream. This area and the one square mile of the separate and independent City of London police district, which lies at the heart of it, constitute "Greater London." Greater London has nearly eight million inhabitants and is the largest city in the world, New York City coming second with over six millions,

\* It includes all parishes and places, except the City of London and the Inner and Middle Temple, any part of which is within a radius of twelve miles or the whole of which is within a radius of fifteen miles from Charing Cross, together with nine parishes which are only partly within the fifteen mile radius.

Greater Paris (including St. Denis and Sceaux) third with over four and a half millions, and Greater Berlin (including the New Berlin districts) fourth with about four and a quarter millions. About one-fifth of the total population of England and Wales inhabit Greater London.

In comparison with the areas which constitute London for other administrative purposes, the Metropolitan police district is a little smaller than the London Telephone area, a quarter as large again as "Water London" (the district of the Metropolitan Water Board), three times the size of "Postal London" (the London postal area) and six times that of "County Council London" (the administrative County of London). It is approximately the same size as the County of Surrey.

One of the most important decisions taken in organising the new police was that, although controlled from a central office, they should be distributed in local companies stationed and resident in divisions of the district. Seventeen divisions were formed, of which ten were small but populous "town" divisions in the centre and the others, sparsely inhabited and thinly policed, spread fanwise over the surrounding country from points just within or on the edge of the town. So many separate parishes, liberties, precincts and places were included in the police district,\* and their boundaries were so irregular, that it was impossible for the divisions to correspond with parishes or even groups of parishes. Notwithstanding this

\* 88 in the original and 215 in the extended district, a number subsequently reduced by the amalgamation of the parishes.



lack of conformity with the existing divisions of Bumbledom, the force was effectively localised, so that the police of each division could be regarded as members of the community exercising certain functions on behalf of their neighbours.

To commence with, each local company was of exactly the same strength (164), and a division had eight sections, each with eight beats, but the superficial area of the divisions varied in accordance with density of population and other local circumstances. Main roads and streets were taken as boundaries of divisions, so far as practicable. The initial uniformity in the police strength of each division soon disappeared, but there has been very little modification of the original plan of a central nucleus of small inner divisions and a wide circle of large outer ones. The early contrast of town and country divisions has become that of urban and suburban, or of one town and another. There are still fields and woods within the beat of the Metropolitan policeman, but London, the "Great Wen" that already seemed so monstrous to Cobbett at the beginning of the last century, has spread with nightmare speed, obliterating the green world. Street has gradually linked itself to street and the whole district has become, or is fast becoming, an almost unbroken spread of brick and mortar, a great city very different from the collection of villages and country houses which Peel had included in his "city" in 1826.

There have been from time to time adjustments of boundaries, but the inner divisions, speaking generally, have remained unaltered to the present

# MAP OF METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT 1929

## Key.

### DIVISION A.

- 1 Hyde Park.
- 2 Cannon Row.
- 3 Rochester Row.
- 4 Wellington Arch

### DIVISION B.

- 1 Walton Street.
- 2 Gerald Road.
- 3 Chelsea.
- 4 Walham Green.
- 5 North Fulham.

### DIVISION C.

- 1 Gt. Mariborough St.
- 2 Vine Street.

### DIVISION D.

- 1 Crawford Place.
- 2 Marylebone Lane.
- 3 Tottenham Court Rd.

### DIVISION E.

- 1 Hunter Street.
- 2 Gray's Inn Road.
- 3 Bow Street.
- 4 Waterloo Pier.

### DIVISION F.

- 1 Paddington.
- 2 Notting Dale.
- 3 Notting Hill.
- 4 Kensington.

### DIVISION G.

- 1 Old Street.
- 2 King's Cross Road.
- 3 City Road.

### DIVISION H.

- 1 Commercial Street.
- 2 Leman Street.
- 3 Wapping.
- 4 Shadwell.
- 5 Arbour Square.

### DIVISION J.

- 1 Bethnal Green.
- 2 Dalston.
- 3 Hackney.
- 4 Victoria Park.
- 5 Leyton.
- 6 Leytonstone.
- 7 Wanstead.
- 8 Barking Side.
- 9 Claybury.
- 10 Woodford.
- 11 Loughton

### DIVISION K.

- 1 Bow.
- 2 Limehouse.
- 3 Poplar.
- 4 Blackwall.
- 5 Isle of Dogs.
- 6 West Ham.
- 7 Plaistow.
- 8 Canning Town.
- 9 North Woolwich.
- 10 East Ham.
- 11 Forest Gate.
- 12 Ilford.
- 13 Chadwell Heath.
- 14 Dagenham.
- 15 Barking.

### DIVISION L.

- 1 Kennington Road.
- 2 Kennington Lane.
- 3 Nine Elms.
- 4 Battersea.
- 5 Clapham.
- 6 Lavender Hill.

### DIVISION M.

- 1 Tower Bridge.
- 2 Southwark.
- 3 Grange Road.
- 4 Rotherhithe.
- 5 Carter Street.
- 6 Deptford.
- 7 Rodney Road.

### DIVISION N.

- 1 Islington.
- 2 Highbury Vale.
- 3 Stoke Newington.
- 4 St. Ann's Road.
- 5 Walthamstow.
- 6 Tottenham.
- 7 Edmonton.
- 8 Chingford.
- 9 Enfield Highway.
- 10 Waltham Abbey.
- 11 Cheshunt.
- 12 Goffs Oak.
- 13 Lea Bridge Road.

### DIVISION P.

- 1 Camberwell.
- 2 Peckham.
- 3 East Dulwich.
- 4 Brockley.
- 5 West Dulwich.
- 6 Sydenham.
- 7 Lewisham.
- 8 Penge.

NOTE.—The Mounted Police Training Establishment is situated at Imber Court, Thames Ditton.

# Key

## DIVISION P.—Contd.

- 9 Southend Village.
- 10 Beckenham.
- 11 Bromley.
- 12 Farnborough.

## DIVISION R.

- 1 Blackheath Road
- 2 East Greenwich.
- 3 Westcombe Park.
- 4 Lee Road.
- 5 Woolwich.
- 6 Shooters Hill.
- 7 Eltham.
- 8 Plumstead.
- 9 Chislehurst.
- 10 Sidcup.
- 11 Belvedere.
- 12 Erith.
- 13 Bexley.
- 14 St. Mary Cray.

## DIVISION S.

- 1 Albany Street.
- 2 St. John's Wood.
- 3 West Hampstead.
- 4 Hampstead.
- 5 Golders Green.
- 6 Hendon.
- 7 Finchley.
- 8 Whetstone.
- 9 Edgware.
- 10 Wealdstone.
- 11 Barnet.
- 12 Elstree.
- 13 Bushey.
- 14 South Mimms.
- 15 Shenley.

## DIVISION T.

- 1 Hammersmith.
- 2 Shepherd's Bush.
- 3 Chiswick.
- 4 Brentford.
- 5 Isleworth.
- 6 Twickenham.
- 7 Hounslow.
- 8 Norwood Green.
- 9 Teddington.
- 10 Hampton.
- 11 Sunbury.
- 12 Bedford.
- 13 Harlington.
- 14 Staines.

## DIVISION V.

- 1 Barnes.
- 2 Putney.
- 3 Wandsworth.
- 4 Roehampton.
- 5 Richmond.
- 6 Wimbledon.
- 7 Kingston.
- 8 New Malden.
- 9 Surbiton.
- 10 Ditton.
- 11 East Molesey.
- 12 Kew.

## DIVISION W.

- 1 Brixton.
- 2 Balham.
- 3 Wandsworth Common.
- 4 Streatham.
- 5 Tooting.
- 6 Mitcham.
- 7 Sutton.
- 8 Wallington.
- 9 Banstead.
- 10 Epsom.
- 11 Earlsfield.

## DIVISION X.

- 1 Harrow Road.
- 2 Kilburn.
- 3 Acton.
- 4 Harlesden.
- 5 Willesden Green.
- 6 Ealing.
- 7 Wembley.
- 8 Hanwell.
- 9 Southall.
- 10 Greenford.
- 11 Harrow.
- 12 Hayes.
- 13 Pinner.
- 14 Ruislip.
- 15 Uxbridge.
- 16 Northwood.
- 17 Harefield.

## DIVISION Y.

- 1 Somers Town.
- 2 Kentish Town.
- 3 Caledonian Road.
- 4 Holloway.
- 5 Upper Holloway.
- 6 Highgate.
- 7 Hornsey.
- 8 Muswell Hill.
- 9 Wood Green.
- 10 New Southgate.
- 11 Southgate.
- 12 East Barnet.
- 13 Enfield Town.
- 14 Potters Bar.
- 15 Winchmore Hill.

## DIVISION Z.

- 1 Knights Hill.
- 2 Gipsy Hill.
- 3 Norbury.
- 4 Thornton Heath.
- 5 South Norwood.
- 6 Croydon.
- 7 Kenley.

NOTE.—Barnes (V), Waterloo Pier (E), Wapping (H), Blackwall (K), and Erith (R) are also Stations of the Thames Division (River Police).

day, except for one interesting change in 1869. This was the amalgamation of the old Covent Garden division (with headquarters at Bow Street) and the Holborn division. The work of the former had very much contracted, as a result of the clearance of the slums around Seven Dials (the "rookeries" of St. Giles), to allow of the formation of New Oxford Street, Shaftesbury Avenue and Charing Cross Road.

On the extension of the district in 1840 the new area, which was then of a very rural character, with one or two market towns, had been incorporated in the outer divisions, and these were later subdivided to form new divisions, as London spread outwards and the population of the outer area grew from a quarter of a million to its present total of over three millions. Three new divisions (W, X and Y) were formed in 1867, and two more (F and J) in 1886.\* Thirty-five years later, in 1921, in response to local demand for a separate police administration for the county borough of Croydon, a twenty-second division (Z), with its headquarters in the borough, was formed by re-arrangement of the boundaries of the other divisions south of the Thames.

How has the requisite number of police for this vast aggregation of people and property been determined, and how are they distributed? If we go back to the beginning, we find that the first Commissioners of Police were asked this question by the parliamentary Committee which took stock

\* A Table of the divisions is given on pages 88-89. The Thames division (the river police) was added in 1839.

of the new police system in 1833, and they replied "according to the measurement of the ground and afterwards as experience pointed out." This formula did not mean that any definite ratio of police to area was at any time adopted; such a basis would obviously be impossible in a town and has never been applied even to country police forces. The plan adopted was to have the whole area mapped out into measured beats, the length of each beat varying with the local conditions, the general rule being that a constable should be able to cover his beat in from ten to fifteen minutes, walking at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles an hour. New beats were subsequently formed, as houses and streets multiplied, and old beats were re-arranged, as conditions varied and neighbourhoods changed in character. The growth of the force during the intervening century has been primarily the result of adding more men for new beats, but it has also been influenced by all sorts of considerations, social developments and changes in police duty. At the outset, practically the whole force was employed on beat patrol: to-day the beats, together with traffic points, fixed points and special patrols, absorb nearly two-thirds of the uniformed police.

On the opening day, 29th September, 1829, about 1,000 men were available in six divisions, and by June, 1830, when the original seventeen divisions were complete, the strength of the force was approximately 3,350. According to returns submitted to the parliamentary Committees of 1828 and 1833, this represented a substantial reduction on the number of peace officers under the old

system, when there were, or should have been, about 4,200 parochial police (constables, watchmen, etc.) and Bow Street patrols, for very much the same area. On the extension of the police district to its present limits in 1840, the strength was increased to 4,300, and from this figure it had grown by 1916 to a nominal total of 22,300. This is the highest figure the establishment of the force has ever reached, but during the War some 4,000 of the Metropolitan police were absent with the armed forces, their places being taken, to some extent, by pensioners. Since 1916 the total strength has declined to about 20,000, as the result of large reductions in the numbers of Metropolitan police specially employed at naval dockyards and military stations. In 1916 about 3,000 men were so employed, mostly outside the police district, a number which by 1928 had been reduced to about 500. Some 200 are in other special employment by Government departments, public companies or private individuals, and the force available for ordinary public duty in the Metropolitan police district is now (1929) about 19,300.

In the matter of numerical growth, as in other matters, a dividing line in the history of the Metropolitan police can be drawn at 1867, the year of the Clerkenwell explosion.\* The force started with a ratio of about one policeman to every 450 of the population; after 1840 this became 1 to 500 and by 1867 had fallen as low as 1 to 525. The average rate of growth in this first period was about 100 a year, and the only exception to the process

\* See page 155,

of gradual increase in this period was the special recruitment of six hundred men in the revolutionary year 1848, when the Chartist agitation was at its height and the police, including the largest number of special constables ever raised in London (reputed to be about 150,000 and including Louis Napoleon), had the honour of being temporarily under the orders of the aged Duke of Wellington.\* In 1868, immediately after the Fenian outrage at Clerkenwell, nearly twelve hundred men were added in a few months, and this brought the ratio of police to population up to 1 to 450 or thereabouts, a standard which was maintained (with fluctuations) for the next twenty years or so by increases averaging about 200 a year.

After 1870 not only did the nineteenth century growth of population work up to its maximum rate and necessitate a more rapid expansion of the force, but the quality as well as the quantity of police protection changed. The average length of a constable's beat was shortened, and the simple conception of police duty as that of patrolling a beat at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles per hour was enlarged; a detective force was created, special patrols introduced, men stationed at fixed points, and supervision improved. The reserves available for emergencies were also increased and many other new services developed. Extraordinary augmentations for all these purposes in 1868-1870 were followed by others in 1882-1885,

\* The Duke had general charge of the military and police dispositions for the great battle with the Chartists that was expected on April 10th, 1848, but never came off. The special constables alone outnumbered the Chartists by about 15 to 1.

to provide special protection against Irish-American dynamite plots, and when the tension on that account was relieved after 1885, there was the strain of the unemployed riots in Hyde Park and Trafalgar Square, strikes, the Jack the Ripper scare, and a fear that crime was getting out of hand.

The peaceful and, comparatively speaking, crimeless nineties saw a return to something less than the old rate of increase (100 a year), and the ratio of police to population had almost reverted to one to 500 by the end of Queen Victoria's reign. Between that time and the Great War the numbers rose rapidly from about 16,000 to about 22,000.\* New demands on the police made it necessary to bring the force up to the standard of strength established in 1868 and considerably beyond it. The principal factor in the increase was, however, the Police (Weekly Rest Day) Act, 1910, which gave one day's rest in seven to every policeman. In the Metropolitan police, where the men had previously had only a fortnightly day off,† this change necessitated an addition of about 1,600 men. From one point of view it was a costly addition for non-effective purposes, but it had the advantage of greatly increasing the reserves. There used to be in each division of the Metropolitan police a number of selected men who received extra pay, and were denominated "the Reserve" (wearing an "R" on their collars, etc.); they were earmarked for first call in emergencies and for duty on special occasions, such as Court functions, processions and public

\* Including those specially employed outside London.

† Save for a brief trial of a weekly rest-day in 1868-70.



meetings, when large numbers of police had to be assembled. Apart from these special duties, they represented the margin of strength which enabled the places of those absent sick or on leave to be supplied. Such a margin of strength is still necessary, but the old Reserve was discontinued in 1913 and the additional men required for special occasions are now found from the two or three thousand who are normally absent every day on weekly leave but can be made use of by suspending leave for the time being.

By 1914 the ratio of police to population had risen above 1 to 400, and was 1 to 386 at the time of the last Census (1921), but it has been steadily falling in the past few years. The pre-War practice of making a regular annual increase to meet the growth of population has not been resumed, and there have been only small augmentations for special purposes. The post-War expansion of London and the demands of traffic regulation and other duties have in the main been met, for the present, by reducing police in neighbourhoods in which changed conditions enabled this to be done, and by transferring men from the inner to the outer areas. New methods of policing the latter are being tried experimentally. The old fixed-point boxes, by which the policemen on point or patrol duty in isolated districts were kept in touch with their stations by telephone, are developing into a system of police telephone boxes which the public can use as well as the police when they wish to summon police assistance or otherwise communicate with the police station of the area.

Motor-cars, wireless and other mechanical agencies are being employed to save man-power and render more efficient service to the public. It seems hardly likely, however, that the policeman on the beat can ever be dispensed with; the majesty of law and order is imperfectly represented by a telephone box, or even by a fast car, and the gradual mechanisation of all things can never completely change Robert into Robot.

The number of police in proportion to population and area has always been higher in London than anywhere else in England and Wales. The first County Police Act of 1839 forbade the initial strength of the county police forces exceeding one to every thousand inhabitants, but this restriction was subsequently removed, and in no other case has any fixed ratio of police to population been prescribed. At present, the ratio in the counties varies between 1 to 1,450 (in Cardiganshire) and 1 to 657 (Hertfordshire), but is generally not far from 1 to 1,000, while in the cities and boroughs, it varies between 1 to 1,066 (in Stoke-on-Trent) and 1 to 464 (in Liverpool) and averages about 1 to 700. The variations in acreage per constable are still more striking, from an average of 1,992 acres per constable in the counties to an average of 43 in the boroughs, 23 in the Metropolitan police district and 1 in the City of London.

It is plain that where the inhabitants are scattered and engaged mainly in agricultural pursuits, their needs in respect of police can be met with comparatively small numbers, but, as population becomes denser and occupations and amusements

more varied, new wants arise, and occasions and circumstances calling for the intervention and assistance of the police multiply. The greatest complexity and variety in the conditions necessitating the employment of police are to be found in the largest towns, and, in the words of the old Scottish poet Dunbar, "London, thou art of townes a *per se*."

One policeman to every four hundred of the population, which is approximately the present (1929) ratio in Greater London, may seem ample provision, but a knowledge of the actual daily distribution of the Metropolitan police suggests a different view of the matter. In the first place, a policeman normally has an eight-hour day, so that, broadly speaking, only a third of the police force would be on duty at one time. But it does not actually work out like that, because the numbers on night duty are about double those on day duty, protection at night being now, as always, the principal item of police duty. For the purpose of beat duty, the day (twenty-four hours) is divided into three tours of eight hours each (with half-an-hour's interval for refreshment on each tour), viz. early turn, 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., late turn, 2 p.m. to 10 p.m., and night duty, 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. As regards point duty, it is only in special cases that a point is manned for the whole of the twenty-four hours; most points are sixteen-hour points, from 8 or 9 a.m. to midnight or 1 a.m. (in two reliefs); some are only eight-hour points. The hours worked by special patrols vary according to circumstances, as also do those of the detective police, who have to pursue their inquiries regardless of the clock.

On early and late turn there are only about two thousand men on beat duty, that is to say, if we take the police district as a whole, about one policeman to every four thousand of the population and every six miles of the streets and roads of Greater London. If the centre of London, say the City of Westminster, is taken, the proportions are approximately one policeman to every nine hundred of the population and each mile and a half of streets.

The total strength of the force is, therefore, only what may be termed the emergency total. About one-sixth of the men, on an average, are absent every day, on their weekly or annual leave, or owing to sickness. The absences of course vary very much with the season of the year. The number on annual leave in January will be less than 50: in August it will be over 2,000. The effective strength of the police for ordinary duties in London, excluding the C.I.D., may (1929) be taken at 15,000. Of this number roughly two-thirds, or about 10,000, are employed (the bulk of them doing duty in three reliefs) as beat patrols, pointsmen and special patrols. The remaining third is accounted for by supervising officers (inspectors and sergeants), the men kept at stations to answer any calls, those employed at Scotland Yard and on clerical or other work at the divisional offices, the public carriage licensing and inspecting staffs, the warrant officers and gaolers at police courts and others on special duties.

Turning to the local distribution of the force, it is obvious that the local apportionment of the police must depend on the varying conditions of the different parts of the district. Population, which

is the most important factor, ranges in the Metropolitan police district from over 250 to less than 1 to the acre, and is constantly shifting as well as growing. The densest inner areas have been gradually thinned out, and neighbourhoods which were once residential have been commercialised. While the population of the County of London has been almost stationary since 1900, at about four and a half millions, that of outer London has increased by a million and a quarter. To take two examples of the shift of population, between 1911 and 1921 more than 60,000 people moved out of Stepney and about 12,000 moved into Hendon.

The distribution of the police must necessarily change to meet changes in the distribution of the population. The present apportionment of the force is given in the following table, with regard to which it should be noted that the names of the divisions are those originally chosen; they do not give much indication of the present local extent of a division\* :—

*Area and Authorised Establishment of each local Division of the Metropolitan Police Force on 31st December, 1928.*

Police Division.	Area (Sq. Miles.)	Authorised Establishment.
A or Whitehall ... ..	1.88	714
B „ Chelsea ... ..	5.17	800
C „ St. James's ... ..	0.76	526

\* The K or Bow division, for example, embraces East and West Ham, Barking, Ilford and Chadwell Heath, and the W or Brixton division stretches almost to Reigate.

# METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT 89

Police Division.	Area (Sq. Miles.)	Authorised Establishment.
D or Marylebone ...	1.41	551
E „ Holborn ...	0.99	605
F „ Paddington...	3.71	610
G „ Finsbury ...	1.84	648
H „ Whitechapel ...	2.08	625
J „ Hackney ...	39.15	950
K „ Bow ...	37.28	1,255
L „ Lambeth ...	4.78	723
M „ Southwark ...	5.61	854
N „ Islington ...	60.44	1,209
P „ Camberwell ...	47.37	993
R „ Greenwich ...	58.46	990
S „ Hampstead ...	82.65	1,113
T „ Hammersmith ...	69.75	935
V „ Wandsworth ...	50.73	877
W „ Brixton ...	57.85	1,028
X „ Kilburn ...	80.88	1,093
Y „ Highgate ...	44.45	1,128
Z „ Croydon ...	34.72	544
Thames ...	7.46	205

The concentration of police in the central divisions is evident. They usually have to provide the men for the first call in any emergency, and it is only to be expected that the West End divisions (A, C, D and E), which include the thronged and cosmopolitan neighbourhoods of Charing Cross, Piccadilly, Regent Street, Oxford Street, Soho and Tottenham Court Road, should be the most policed. Density of population is the main reason for the comparatively high proportion of police to area in the East End as,

for example, in the H or Whitechapel division, but some allowance has also to be made for the fact that the policing of the poor and crowded districts is for the benefit of all, a truth which was expressed by the first Commissioners of Police, before the parliamentary Committee of 1833, when they said, "We look upon it that we are watching St. James's when we are watching St. Giles and bad places in general."

The A division, which comprises Westminster, Whitehall and the Royal Palaces and Parks, has several special features. Originally the largest in size of the inner divisions but now one of the smallest, it is traditionally the premier division. Its headquarters are at the police station adjoining New Scotland Yard in Cannon Row, a name that was famous in the days of the suffragettes, whose escapades in Whitehall and Downing Street usually ended there. The A division shares with the Special Branch of the C.I.D. duties of an imperial and national character, the cost of which is borne by the Treasury. A considerable proportion of its men are employed on these special duties at the Houses of Parliament, the Royal Palaces, in and around Downing Street and Whitehall, and in Hyde Park. Within its boundaries take place most of the great public events and pageants and many of the disorders of London. On ceremonial occasions such as the opening of Parliament, Royal Garden parties, Courts and Levées, Armistice Day, visits of foreign potentates, processions, meetings in Trafalgar Square, the A division is reinforced by contingents from all over the police district, but it has to

make the principal contribution at these times and, in general, may be regarded as the imperial and national division of the Metropolitan Police.

If A division exhibits the more spectacular side of police work, other central divisions such as C (Vine Street), D (Tottenham Court Road), and E (Bow Street) have the varied and difficult tasks that are associated with duty in and around the Strand, Piccadilly, Leicester Square, Soho and the back streets of this area. Vine Street, the headquarters of C division, is possibly the most noted and certainly one of the plainest of police stations. Hidden a yard or two from Piccadilly, the position and appearance of Vine Street seem to symbolise the reverse and penitential side of Vanity Fair, and its name is curiously indicative of what brings it much of its work. Those who are familiar with the duties of the Vine Street police and the conditions under which they are carried on think rather of its many officers who daily touch pitch and are not defiled than of the few who have yielded to the temptations that thickly beset them.

No one can judge fully of the Metropolitan police who does not know them in the East End divisions (G, H, J and K), or round about "the Borough" (L and M), where, amid all that is drab and unlovely and much that is vicious, in the teeming streets of Haggerston, Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, Canning Town, Walworth or Bermondsey, the policeman stands out as a pillar of law and order, the friend and protector, appealed to unhesitatingly in troubles and difficulties great and small.

In the variety of conditions confronting the police



the Metropolitan police district is almost an epitome of England: a change of station may take a constable from Goff's Oak or Woodmansterne to Petticoat Lane or Chinatown, from rural simplicity to the midst of the thickest crowds and traffic, theatres and shops, factories and warehouses, docks and shipping, slums and foreign purlieus. The organisation which comprehends all these multifarious aspects of London's life in a single whole and maintains a uniform standard of order and security is the Metropolitan police, and the experience of a hundred years has fully justified the foresight of those who saw the advantage and grasped the opportunity of embracing this vast complex, grown far beyond their dreams, under one control and one tradition of disinterested public service.

## Chapter V

### SCOTLAND YARD

*The Office of the Commissioner of Police—The Scope of his Functions—Administration of the Force—Recruiting, Training and Discipline—Civil Business—Miscellaneous Police Matters—The Secretariat—The Lost Property Office—Civil Servants and Police*

SCOTLAND YARD, though commonly used as signifying the detective police, is the name of the headquarters office of the Metropolitan Police. It is now nearly forty years since it became New Scotland Yard, but, following popular usage, the prefix is disregarded in this book. The original police office for the administration of the force was at 4, Whitehall Place (previously a private house) with a police station at the back entered from Scotland Yard.\* The use of the name "Scotland Yard" is generally thought to date only from 1842, when the detective branch was established in a separate

\* Now known as "Great Scotland Yard," Scotland Yard was so called because it once was the site of a palace for the reception of the Kings and Queens of Scotland when they visited the English Court. Margaret Queen of Scotland, sister to Henry VIII and widow of King James I of Scotland, who was killed at Flodden, seems to have been the last Royal occupant from Scotland. This palace was eventually absorbed into the palace of Whitehall. In the case of the police office, history has been reversed: it began as Whitehall Place and is now Scotland Yard.

building in Scotland Yard ; but from the beginning we find the police headquarters referred to in official documents and in the public Press, sometimes as "Whitehall Place," and sometimes as "Scotland Yard."

The <sup>aff</sup> at 4, Whitehall Place and Scotland Yard <sup>gr</sup> <sup>shipping</sup> <sup>organisation</sup> <sup>adequacy</sup> <sup>inconvenience</sup> <sup>these</sup> <sup>separate</sup> <sup>congested</sup> <sup>habitations</sup> <sup>led</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>purchase</sup> <sup>in</sup> <sup>1885</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>a</sup> <sup>site</sup> <sup>on</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>Embankment</sup> <sup>on</sup> <sup>which</sup> <sup>New</sup> <sup>Scotland</sup> <sup>Yard</sup> <sup>was</sup> <sup>built</sup> <sup>to</sup> <sup>the</sup> <sup>designs</sup> <sup>of</sup> <sup>Mr.</sup> <sup>Norman</sup> <sup>Shaw</sup>. The 2,500 tons of granite used for the base of the building were quarried and dressed by the convicts at Dartmoor—an economical arrangement somewhat suggestive of the methods by which the Pyramids were built. A large part of the site is land reclaimed from the river by the construction of the Embankment in 1863. It was originally purchased from the Crown as a site for an Opera House, which, however, never got beyond the structure, remains of which are still to be seen in the lower regions of the police building. All the departments were transferred to New Scotland Yard in 1890. Continued expansion led to the erection (in 1905-1907) of a companion building, known as Scotland House, which houses the Receiver of Police and his staff as well as other police departments and the Special Constabulary headquarters. In the basement of Scotland House is the Metropolitan Police Printing Office and in its roof the wireless station. In 1927, as a result of still further expansion, a new police building was opened in Lambeth Road, to accommodate the

Lost Property Office, the Public Carriage Office, the Receiver's Store and the Police Garage.

The Commissioner's Office at Scotland Yard is primarily the central office for the general administration and control of the twenty-three London and three dockyard divisions among which the twenty thousand men of the Metropolitan police are distributed. In comparison with the headquarter offices of other police forces in Great Britain it is a large and complicated establishment, but, compared with, say, the Prefecture of Police in Paris, the Police Presidency of Berlin, or the Police Directorate of Vienna, its organisation and functions are relatively simple.

Pending the development of local government in the Metropolitan area, the police in London were for a time responsible for the safety of buildings, smoke prevention, inspection of common lodging-houses and other matters, which came within the old wide meaning of the word "police" but are now the concern of municipal authorities. The Commissioner of Police, however, was never in much danger of becoming a general providence, and, after 1870, the police gradually gave up to the new local authorities all duties of the kind indicated.

Division of police administration into departments began in 1842 with the formation of a detective branch, which in 1878 developed into the Criminal Investigation department. Shortly afterwards one of the Assistant Commissioners was definitely placed in charge of the administration and discipline of the force, and in 1884 a department known as "Civil Business" was created to deal with the

miscellaneous statutory duties of the Commissioner, in connection with such matters as the regulation of public carriages, licensed premises, betting and gaming, pedlars, etc. These three, administration of the force, criminal investigation and civil business, are still the three main departments of Scotland Yard, but the work coming under the last-named department has increased so much that it has been necessary to divide it into two sections, one Assistant Commissioner taking traffic and public carriages and another the rest of the civil business.

The four departments, known as "A" (administration), "B" (traffic and public carriages), "C" (criminal investigation) and "L" (legal) are staffed by police and civil servants,\* and each is presided over by an Assistant Commissioner. There is also a Secretariat consisting wholly of civil servants. Like the Commissioner, the Assistant Commissioners are appointed by the Crown, on the recommendation of the Secretary of State, and are justices of the peace for the counties of London, Middlesex, Surrey, Hertford, Essex, Kent, Berks and Buckingham, but may not act as such at any court of general or quarter sessions, or in any matter out of sessions, except for the preservation of the peace, the prevention of crime, the detention and committal of offenders and carrying into execution the purposes of the Metropolitan Police Acts. Deputy Assistant Commissioners (now three in number) were introduced in 1919; they are appointed by the Secretary of State and are not justices of the peace

\* See page 121 as to the distinction between police and civil servants.

**PLAN OF  
THE ORGANIZATION OF  
THE METROPOLITAN POLICE  
FORCE**



but are sworn in as constables. The combined staffs of the four departments under Assistant Commissioners and of the secretariat correspond, in a general way, to the administrative and clerical staffs of the Prefecture of Police in Paris and to the interior service (Innendienst) or administrative police (Verwaltung-Polizei) of Berlin's organisation. The chart shows the general arrangement of the departments of Scotland Yard.

As crime, traffic and public carriages are separately dealt with in other chapters, the present one will be confined to the more important of those aspects of police organisation and work which belong to the departments of Assistant Commissioners "A" and "L" and the Secretariat.

### *Administration of the Force*

The Commissioner is the commanding officer of the force: Assistant Commissioner "A," who acts as Deputy Commissioner, is the second in command and is specially responsible for recruiting, training and discipline, and all the miscellaneous matters that concern the general administration and welfare of the force. Recruiting, training and discipline: these are fundamental matters in the administration of a police force, and first place should naturally be given to recruiting, as everything may be said to depend on the type of man who joins the police.

### *Recruiting*

In this country the police are taken from the population at large; they are not, except to a very



limited extent, drawn from the Army or any other reservoir of trained men. From the first days of the Metropolitan police, the policy pursued, in recruiting for the force, was to endeavour to get men from the agricultural community, not only because of the superior physique of the rural worker, but because countrymen, without previous experience of town life, made more trustworthy policemen than those who were London bred and might be described as knowing too much about London. The countryman's mind had the advantage, from the point of view of those who had to train him as a constable, of being fallow and not infertile: the Londoner's might be more fertile, but it was usually far from fallow. Down to about 1890, the supply of rural candidates was, on the whole, sufficient. Thereafter the recruiting of country lads for the Metropolitan police became more difficult, partly as a result of the Police Act, 1890, which made the grant of pensions compulsory in every force and authorised improved scales of pensions, thereby increasing the attractions of service in the county constabularies. The complete standardisation of pay and other conditions of police service effected in 1919 has further deprived the Metropolitan police of advantages over any other force in the matter of recruiting, except the not inconsiderable ones that lie in the attraction of London itself and the greater opportunities of advancement and distinction that may be found in so large a force.

The sixteen hundred or so additional recruits required in consequence of the passing of the Police

(Weekly Rest Day) Act, 1910, necessitated the adoption of special measures, and a small recruiting commission was, therefore, set up in 1909 to travel the country from Caithness to Devon and Cornwall. The areas which yielded the best recruits were the West Country—particularly the Severn Valley and Devonshire, but the commission was also fortunate in obtaining excellent raw material from the highlands of Scotland. Local chief constables were, as a rule, ready to co-operate with the commission, but by some its activities were regarded as poaching. This method of recruiting came to an end with the War and is not likely to be revived. Immediately after the Armistice, when there were several thousand vacancies in the Metropolitan police, recruiting officers were sent to France to place the advantages of police service before the men about to be demobilised. This measure, and the intensive recruiting which was necessary throughout 1919 and 1920, resulted in the leeway of the War years (when recruiting was suspended) being rapidly made up, but, in the process, quality was rather sacrificed to quantity, and men were taken mainly on their War record: thus 1919 was not a good vintage year for the Metropolitan police, and it was found impossible to keep a considerable proportion of its yield in recruits.

The police service is not an easy one to recruit for. Night duty calls for special endurance and the power of sleeping by day. Much of an ordinary constable's work is characterised by monotonous performance of a routine, but at any time he may be called upon to exercise intelligence and dis-

cretion of a high order ; men possessed of these qualities are repelled by the other aspects of police work. The greatest difficulty in regard to candidates for the police has always been that of getting sufficient brains with the brawn. The education of those who are willing to take up police work is not, on the average, as good as might have been expected. In 1928, for example, more than 30 per cent. of the applicants who were satisfactory so far as regards character and physique had to be rejected as being too illiterate. The recent revolutionary changes in the pay and position of a policeman have had some effect in improving the educational standard, but the Metropolitan police, in common with other forces, may still be said to be recruited mainly on the basis of good character, physique and a knowledge of "the three Rs." There has been just a sprinkling lately of public school boys, and even one or two University graduates, but it would be a mistake to suppose that the general standard of entrants is, as yet, other than that of the elementary school. It will, however, be patent to anyone who has come into close contact with the police service that, even at the old rates of pay, it attracted men of exceptional ability and intelligence, and many in whom training and experience developed a remarkable talent for police work.

The educational standard insisted upon as regards candidates for the force varies with the demand for recruits, and that attained by the candidates who present themselves is also subject to considerable fluctuations. In 1927, for example, only

just over 1 per cent. of those who were accepted for training were of London University Matriculation standard, whereas in 1928 there were nearly 9 per cent.

The following table shows the occupations of the selected candidates in 1927:—

<i>Occupation.</i>	<i>Number.</i>	<i>Percentage.</i>
Mechanics (chiefly motor)...	277	22.16
Clerks ... ..	183	14.6
Skilled and semi-skilled workers in various occupations ... ..	177	14.16
Labourers : General ...	73	5.8
„ Agricultural ...	76	6.08
Miners ... ..	87	6.9
Carpenters and Joiners ...	65	5.2
Shop Assistants ... ..	62	4.9
Motor Drivers ... ..	50	4.0
Gardeners ... ..	37	2.9
Merchant Seamen ... ..	34	2.7
Railway Workers, Porters, etc.	29	2.3
Soldiers ... ..	28	2.2
Machinists ... ..	27	2.1
Warehousemen ... ..	17	1.3
Commercial Travellers ...	14	1.1
Students ... ..	14	1.1
<hr/>		
Total ... ..	1,250	

*Training*

In police work, as in most other spheres, practical experience is the best training, but the preliminary education of a policeman is now recognised as a matter of the first importance. The general efficiency of the police force is determined, in great measure, by the knowledge and ability of each individual member of it, and these, in turn, owe much to the training of the young constable. Originally, a Metropolitan police recruit, before being posted to duty, was given nothing but a week or two's drill at Wellington Barracks. This had the effect of reducing him to a state in which he was prepared to obey orders without question. He had then to pick up a knowledge of his work, as best he could, on the streets and from his fellow-constables, who might or might not be suitable guides in the matter. This rough-and-ready method has been replaced by the Police Training School, established at Peel House, Westminster, by Sir Edward Henry in 1907, and by a system which aims at ensuring that a constable possesses and is trained to apply at least the elements of the knowledge required of him, before he goes on duty. It also eliminates in the initial stages those who show themselves unlikely to become efficient policemen. The result of the careful selection and weeding of recruits now insisted on has been enormously to reduce the wastage from the force in the early years of service. In the old days about 40 per cent. of the recruits left or had to be removed in their first year after joining: now only 5 per cent. drop out during the probationary year.

Applications to join the force come before a Selection Committee consisting of one of the Chief Constables and two divisional superintendents. The applicant must be a British subject, of pure British descent, over 20 and under 27, at least 5 feet 9 inches in height and physically fit. If exhaustive inquiry as to his character is satisfactory, if he can negotiate a preliminary educational test\*, and is in all respects suitable, he is sent to the training school. There every candidate for the force undergoes a course of resident instruction, under a police staff specially selected for the purpose and periodically changed in order to keep the school in touch with everyday police work. The course varies from ten to seventeen weeks, according to a recruit's capacity and attainments. Peel House, in addition to being an admirably equipped school, affords the candidates some of the comforts and conveniences of a residential club.

Peel House has not hitherto been available for the training of men for other forces (an arrangement adopted at the Birmingham Police school) but a recent development is the holding of courses of lectures on police subjects for overseas police officers and the senior officers of the Metropolitan force—a step in the direction of a Staff College for the police.

Police duty is the main thing taught at the school, occupying about two-thirds of the training (after completion of any necessary educational instruction), the remainder of the time being spent

\* Arithmetic and the dictation of part of a leading article from *The Times*; polysyllabic leader-writing may thus have unsuspected reactions.

on First Aid, Foot Drill, Physical Training and Self Defence. Theoretical instruction is accompanied, wherever possible, by practical demonstration, and every recruit is individually exercised and tested. At the end of the course, he has to pass an examination in his knowledge of police duty and in the practical application of it before he can be accepted for the force.

Within the time allowed it is impossible to turn out a fully efficient policeman from the school, and the work done there is regarded as only the foundation of the recruit's training. During the first twelve months after joining his division, the recruit is, therefore, on probation, and his training is continued under an Inspector, specially appointed as the divisional instructor, who takes him through the Instruction Book in a series of lessons or lectures. The Instruction Book and a little companion volume known as "*Duty Hints*" are the policeman's official guides to his daily work.

At the end of three months' duty the recruit has to pass an examination in his division as to his knowledge of police work, and at the end of six months he returns to the school for his final examination by the Selection Committee. If he passes, his appointment will be confirmed, when he has completed twelve months' service, provided that he is then certified to be efficient and well conducted by his superintendent. If he fails, he may be either discharged or given an extra six months in which to qualify himself; but if he fails again, his career as a policeman will be at an end, save in very exceptional cases.

It may be emphasised that, at every stage, the examination barrier is as much a test of practical ability and sound judgment in the actual performance of police duty as of theoretical knowledge. The educational attainments of a police recruit may be very small, but men who have had very little schooling are often apt pupils when it comes to practical police duty.

### *Discipline*

If the training of the young constable is the foundation on which the general efficiency of the police rests, discipline is the cement which holds the force together. The Discipline Code, prescribed in the general Regulations of the Secretary of State for all forces and embodied in the General Orders of the force, specifies about fifty different ways in which a policeman may commit an offence against discipline, under such general heads as discreditable conduct, insubordination, disobedience of orders, neglect of duty, falsehood or prevarication, corrupt practices, unlawful or unnecessary exercise of authority, oppressive conduct, malingering, drunkenness, untidiness, etc. Offences against discipline are punishable, according to their degree of gravity, by (1) dismissal, (2) being required to resign (as an alternative to dismissal), (3) reduction in rank, (4) reduction in pay, (5) a fine, (6) a reprimand, or (7) a caution. Every punishment, except the last (if it can be called a punishment), is entered on a conduct sheet and is brought up against the defaulter, if he offends again, but, in the case of slight



defaults, an entry may be cancelled after a prescribed interval of good conduct.

The authorities empowered to deal with offences against discipline are, in ascending order, the Superintendent of the division, the Chief Constable of the district, a Discipline Board presided over by an Assistant Commissioner, and the Commissioner, an appeal lying in every case to the next higher authority. If the sentence is dismissal or compulsory resignation, the Police Appeals Act, 1927, now allows a further appeal to the Secretary of State.

Superintendents have power to punish constables by a fine not exceeding four days' pay, for minor offences. Chief Constables deal with other defaults by constables and with offences by sergeants (below the rank of station sergeant), the maximum penalties they can inflict being reduction in rank or a fine of a week's pay for each offence. More serious offences, for which a defaulter may be liable to dismissal or compulsory resignation, and all cases of defaulters above the rank of section sergeant are referred to Scotland Yard to be dealt with by a Discipline Board.

The procedure before a Police Discipline Board is something like that of a court martial. A defaulter is allowed the assistance of a friend and given every facility for stating his case. If the charge is established, the Assistant Commissioner awards the punishment, but the defaulter can appeal to the Commissioner, with the continued assistance of his friend if he so desires, either on the facts or against the punishment. Even if there is no appeal, the

findings of the Board and the punishment awarded are in every case available for the Commissioner's consideration.

No member of the force whose conduct is impugned is left in the dark at any stage as to the steps taken with regard to him. All adverse reports which may affect a man's prospects must be communicated to him before being forwarded to the Commissioner, and men reported for misconduct or complained of by the public, are allowed to take copies of all reports or statements relating to the charges against them.

In recent years offences against discipline have averaged about five or six hundred a year (in a force of 20,000 men), about one-third of the cases being the subject of proceedings before a Discipline Board. The majority of the defaults relate to neglect to patrol beats, exceeding the period of half-an-hour allowed for refreshment in the middle of the eight hours of duty and similar derelictions of duty.

Judged by the number of defaulters, and by the dismissals and other punishments, the general standard of conduct in the Metropolitan police force has improved out of all knowledge in the course of its history. The two principal reasons for this improvement are the great increase in sobriety and the care taken in weeding out unsuitable candidates.

Drunkenness used to be the commonest weakness of the policeman, as of the population generally. In the early days the Commissioners had a hard struggle to enforce a high standard in this respect, and every pay day was followed by a string of

dismissals for "the crime" of being drunk, a first offence being in those days also the last. Fifty years ago, when the force was less than half its present size, there were as many defaulters in two or three months as there are now in a year; between three and four hundred men had to be got rid of every year, and about the same number had to be reduced in rank or class, mostly for repeated drunkenness or offences in connection with drink. In the five years, 1924-1928, the number of men dismissed or compelled to resign or reduced in rank for giving way to drink averaged less than twenty a year: in 1928 the total number dealt with for drinking or drunkenness was fifty-five. It has been calculated that nowadays a barrel of beer among a hundred policemen may last a month.

In the first ten years about a third of the force were discarded every year: for a long time after that the annual wastage from all causes averaged 20 per cent., and it was still as high as 10 per cent. in the seventies: recently it has been about 5 per cent. The difference is, mainly, in respect of dismissals and compulsory resignations, the total number of which, in the five years 1924-1928, averaged between fifty and sixty a year or about a quarter per cent. of the force.

### *Complaints Against the Police by the Public*

A very important matter coming under the head of discipline is that of complaints against the police by the public. As the Royal Commission on the Metropolitan police of 1908 pointed out, the maintenance of good relations between police and public

largely depends on the latter being able to rely on any grievances which they may have with respect to the behaviour of the police, or the exercise of their authority, being promptly and effectively inquired into and, so far as possible, remedied. The procedure regarding such complaints is based on the recommendations made by the Royal Commission on the subject. Every complaint is investigated, in the first instance, by the Chief Constable of the district, and, if the charge is a serious one, the case is referred to the Commissioner, to decide whether it is one for criminal proceedings against the accused man or for a Discipline Board. If a case of complaint by a member of the public goes before a Discipline Board, the complainant and his witnesses are invited to attend and allowed the fullest opportunity of substantiating the complaint.

It has always been the rule that, if a complaint made against a policeman amounted to a criminal charge and there was conflicting evidence on the subject, the matter must be referred to a magistrate, so that the evidence might be taken on oath. Even if there is no conflict of evidence, a serious charge against a policeman is always handed over to the Courts to deal with, and in any case this course is followed when the complainant wishes it; the most serious cases are referred to the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The necessary inquiries in connection with a criminal charge against a policeman are carried out by other members of the force, and the zeal and impartiality displayed in bringing guilty comrades to justice have been too often demonstrated for

any fairminded person to doubt that the force is anxious and ready to find out and get rid of its black sheep. Suggestions that the *esprit de corps* in the police involves backing each other up in all circumstances have not only been disproved but also strongly condemned in the Courts. In the unfortunate Goddard case of 1929 it was widely and justly remarked, as a reassuring feature, that it was the police themselves who brought the facts so fully to light.

*General Administration, Welfare of the Force, the Medical Service, etc.*

Apart from recruiting, training and discipline, which constitute his principal responsibilities, Assistant Commissioner "A" deals with such matters as the distribution of the police, generally or on special occasions, promotions, transfers, etc. A large force like the Metropolitan police is in a constant state of flux; casualties and changes of all sorts are of daily occurrence; vacancies have to be filled and men moved from division to division and station to station and from one duty to another, or bodies of police have to be assembled for special occasions. All this is regulated by Assistant Commissioner "A." He is also responsible as regards questions of accommodation, use of motor transport and bicycles, medical treatment, recreation, canteens, and all the miscellaneous questions that are involved in the domestic administration of the force. Most aspects of the organisation and activities described in the next chapter come within his purview. For these and other purposes he has a staff of police officers,

who used to be called the "Executive branch," but are now known as "A. 3." This branch includes most of the police personnel engaged on clerical or office work at Scotland Yard and those constables who are attached to headquarters for special purposes (motor drivers, wireless operators, etc.). It is responsible for the working of the telegraph office and prepares and issues the daily Police Orders, which have to be read to the men when parading for duty, and, in conjunction with other Branches, the "Informations," by which particulars of lost property and so forth are circulated to all stations and to pawnbrokers and dealers.

The telegraph office is engaged throughout the day and night sending and receiving messages, by telegraph and automatic recording instruments, to and from the twenty-three head stations of divisions. By this means and by wireless the two hundred police stations, and the thousands of police scattered over the seven hundred square miles of Greater London, can be apprised within a very short time of, say, a criminal whose arrest is desired, or a motor-car for which a look-out is to be kept, or of any other matter requiring immediate general or local action. For example, it was discovered one afternoon that a prisoner had managed to escape from a prison van while it was standing in the yard of a police station in Westminster. Search for him among London's millions and in its endless labyrinths of streets might seem a hopeless task, but the telegraph office quickly circulated his description; it was read to all reliefs parading for duty, and, within a few hours, the runaway was

caught in North London and slept in a police cell that night.

### *The Police Medical Service*

The police medical service is attached to "A" department. Free medical treatment has been one of the privileges enjoyed by the Metropolitan police from the beginning, and it is now a statutory requirement (under the Secretary of State's Regulations) in all forces. Although treatment is free, a policeman, while absent from duty through sickness or injury, other than an injury received on duty, has a deduction made from his pay at the rate of 1s. a day, increased to 2s. a day after three months' absence. This deduction, which dates back to 1829 in the Metropolitan police, was originally designed as a discouragement of malingering; it is now embodied in the regulations applicable to all forces and goes towards the cost of pensions.

The general medical arrangements in the Metropolitan police are under the direction of a Chief Medical Officer, who is a consulting physician, and he is assisted by a consulting surgeon and a deputy physician, all three appointments being made by the Secretary of State on the nomination of the Commissioner. Every police station has its own police doctor known as the divisional surgeon (appointed by the Commissioner on the recommendation of the Chief Medical Officer), who attends to men attached to the station. All cases where a policeman is seriously ill or has been on the sick list for more than fourteen days are referred to the Chief Medical Officer; he arranges for operations,

supervises the work of the divisional and dental surgeons and advises on medical questions generally.

The headquarters medical staff are all distinguished practising consultants who devote only part of their time to police work, and the divisional surgeons are doctors in general practice. This plan has been favoured, in preference to a whole-time medical service, as best calculated to secure to the police the services of those who are in the very forefront of their profession and are able to combine the experience of hospital work and outside practice with special knowledge of police medical problems. As a result, Scotland Yard has been associated with very distinguished physicians and surgeons, to the great advantage of the service.

The work of the divisional surgeon is of great importance and responsibility, as regards the public as well as the police. He is called in by the police, whenever necessary, to prisoners or persons taken ill or injured in the streets, or to carry out other special duties such as post-mortem examinations, medical examination of accused persons, etc. As everyone knows, it is the police surgeon who has the difficult task of discriminating between the state of having had too much to drink and that of being drunk, and the police rely on his expert guidance to avoid confusing drunkenness with illness or mere excess of animal spirits.

The Metropolitan police have no hospital of their own, but enjoy the benefit of treatment at one of London's largest and best equipped general hospitals, St. Thomas's, a near neighbour of Scotland Yard, where, by special arrangement, at least thirty beds



are always at their disposal. All officers requiring operations and serious medical cases are sent to St. Thomas's unless urgency requires them to be taken to a nearer hospital. Large numbers also receive out-patient treatment in the Massage, X-ray, Orthopædic and other special departments.

Although there is no police hospital, there is a Metropolitan Police Nursing Home in Denmark Hill, to which single men who fall ill in section houses are sent, if they are not cases for hospital treatment, and also men recovering from operations or others in need of special care and attention, such as those suffering from digestive troubles, to which the police, with their irregular meals, are specially liable. The Home has a Matron and trained nurses, and is regarded by the men as one of the most valuable of recent improvements in the official arrangements for their welfare. The seaside Police Convalescent Home at Hove is also, in part, supported by contributions from the Police Fund, and hundreds of Metropolitan policemen go there every year.

Motor ambulances are kept at Scotland Yard for the conveyance of sick police, but the Metropolitan police do not undertake any ambulance service for the general public, this being the province of the London County Council, the Metropolitan Asylums Board, the local authority, or the St. John Ambulance Association. The police hand-ambulances, which are kept at stations or housed in shelters in the streets, are intended primarily for use in cases of persons found insensible through drink, or others whom it is difficult or impossible to convoy to the station on their own legs.

It may be added that fire brigade duty is a public service which in many provincial towns is combined with the police, but this has never been the case in London.\* When the Metropolitan police were established, the parish churchwardens and overseers had the responsibility of maintaining fire engines. These were presently supplemented by fire engines maintained by the leading Insurance Companies. In 1866 a Metropolitan Fire Brigade was established under the Metropolitan Board of Works ; in 1888 this was taken over by the London County Council and is now the London Fire Brigade. The work of the police in connection with a fire is to detect it, summon the Fire Brigade and, pending their arrival, do their best to secure the safety of life and property and extinguish the fire. When the Fire Brigade arrives, the police assist by keeping back the crowd, diverting traffic, etc., but they are not specially trained for and do not take part in the handling of the fire appliances.

*Civil Business—The Fourth Assistant Commissioner  
("L") and his Department*

The civil business side of Scotland Yard is under an Assistant Commissioner ("L"), who has a staff of civil servants. His province cannot be defined so easily as those of his colleagues who are concerned with crime and traffic ; it relates to a multiplicity of statutes and statutory regulations or byelaws not dealt with by the other two, and is largely

\* Although in 1862 and again in 1877 Select Committees of the House of Commons recommended that the Fire Brigade should be amalgamated with the police in London.

concerned with matters of police in the old abstract sense of the word—the good rule and government of the community, with particular reference to the prevention of “nuisances” and “disorders” rather than crime. The first ten years of the new police system having shown that the police were constantly expected to intervene in regard to matters of misconduct in the streets or places of public resort, with regard to which they had no statutory powers, the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, was passed for the further improvement of the system in these respects. It was in these provisions that the “civil business” of Scotland Yard originated: they were the London form of the “police” legislation which was being widely enacted at the time in local Acts, and was later standardised in the Towns Police Clauses Act, 1847.

It is possible to mention by name only a few items which come within the scope of this department of police activity. Innumerable small matters relating to the safety and convenience of the public are included. If, for instance, a child under 7 is left in a room where there is an open firegrate but not a firescreen, or if one under 16 smokes a cigarette, or if a carpet or rug is shaken in the street at any time or a doormat after 8 a.m., or if obstruction is caused by persons selling in the street, the police may have to take cognisance of these errors and their action in regard to them is under the general eye of Assistant Commissioner “L.”

As regards more serious matters, the control of aliens and night clubs have claimed most attention recently. Both are matters which can be only

briefly noticed, though the first is very important. The requirements as to the registration of aliens by the police date from the War, but the power to make Expulsion or Deportation Orders, which rests not with the police but with the Home Secretary, was first conferred by the Aliens Act, 1905. The duty of the Commissioner of Police in regard to the deportation of an alien is to ascertain and lay any facts which seem to make it desirable before the Secretary of State, or if the alien is charged with an offence, before the Court, with a view to a recommendation for deportation being made by the magistrate. When an Order is made the police have to arrange for the alien's departure and escort him to his ship.

The direction and supervision of the uniformed police in enforcing the law in regard to licensed premises and clubs (including night clubs) has long been one of the most difficult responsibilities of the "civil business" department. In the Metropolitan police district the police have, as elsewhere, the duty of acting as watchdogs in regard to irregularities on licensed premises and assisting the justices in administering the law: they also have to deal with applications for special exemptions permitting the sale of intoxicating liquor during prohibited hours on special occasions, as this jurisdiction rests in London not with the justices but with the Commissioner of Police.

If most of this work in connection with the licensing law goes unheard of by the public and unsung by the Press, night clubs have lately formed a striking exception. The policeman in evening dress in a night club

is either scoffed at in the Press and on the stage as a figure of fun, or else denounced as an *agent provocateur*. In real life, policemen and dress clothes are not so incongruous as on the stage, although this kind of duty is no joy to the average police officer; it is difficult and thankless. But the law has imposed restrictions on clubs, and, until the police are given right of entry, they must either allow the law to be broken with impunity or incur reproach and ridicule because they use subterfuge to try to enforce it.

Prosecutions under the Betting and Gaming laws, the regulation of street collections, "Flag Days," the licensing of firearms, and pedlars' licences, are amongst the other matters appertaining to this department of Scotland Yard. Excluding cases coming under the head of crime (in the usual sense), traffic and public carriages, the authority of Assistant Commissioner "L" is necessary before the police can apply for any warrant or summons, except in a few routine matters with which the superintendent of a division is empowered to deal.

*The Secretariat—The Lost Property Office—Civil  
Servants and Police*

The main body of civil servants\* at Scotland Yard is concentrated in the Secretariat. The Secretary has charge of the general correspondence of the office, the recruitment and control of the civil service staff, accounts, statistics, pension awards, etc. Among many other duties he spreads his wing over that limbo of lost gamps and unattached attaché cases, the Lost Property Office (L.P.O.), to

\* See page 121.

which nearly every traveller in the public carriages of London sooner or later has recourse.

The Lost Property Office was until recently housed at Scotland Yard in very inadequate premises, entered from the Embankment. In January, 1927, it was removed to more ample accommodation in the new police buildings in Lambeth, where its inaccessibility is sometimes complained of. But it is really quite easy to find and will be easier still when the new Lambeth bridge is completed. Anyone who can locate the residence of the Archbishop of Canterbury has practically discovered the Lost Property Office and has only a few steps farther to go. This proximity has had its inconveniences for the Archbishop. A direction plate fastened to a lamp-post at the river end of Lambeth Road and intended to direct callers to the L.P.O., kept slipping round and pointing at the Palace, until at last the Archbishop was compelled to ask the aid of Scotland Yard in diverting the stream of callers who knocked at his mediæval gateway and affronted the seneschal with inquiries as to whether this was now the place where they had to come for their umbrellas.

The articles deposited in the Lost Property Office are those found in taxicabs, omnibuses, tramcars or other public carriages. The deposits now number nearly 200,000 a year, an increase of 100 per cent. having been recorded between 1921 and 1926. As many as 800 umbrellas may be received in one day, and the miscellaneous articles range from a baby's shoe, or a quarter of a pound of butter, to a lawn mower and jewellery worth hundreds of pounds.

Perhaps the worst case of forgetfulness recorded hitherto is that of a Scotchman who left a small bear asleep in a taxicab, but many people lose hardly less curious objects, large, small, alive, dead and sometimes putrescent. About 40 per cent. of the articles are claimed and restored to the owners; of the unclaimed articles about half are of such small value (less than 5s.) as not to make it worth while to claim them and pay the statutory charges. Practically all above the value of £5 are restored.

The Secretary is also responsible for the Press Bureau. This comparatively recent institution at Scotland Yard is in an entirely different category from Press Bureaux associated with the police abroad which are charged with the censorship of the Press and even of the Stage. There is, of course, no censorship of the Press in this country save in war time and the existence of a Press Bureau at Scotland Yard does not even mean that what appears in the Press about the police or crime has any official imprimatur: a great deal of it is as much news to Scotland Yard as it is to the public. The Press Bureau serves the simple purpose of a liaison office between the police and the Press. The Press can, if they choose, apply to the Bureau for accurate information, so far as it can be given, about police matters, or, through the Bureau, the Commissioner can ask the Press to publish or refrain from publishing information, as may seem desirable, for the purpose of assisting the police in their investigations or otherwise, and many are the occasions on which the Press assist in this way.

Some word of further explanation may usefully be given with regard to the "civil servants" of Scotland Yard and their relationship to the police force. In the first place, as has been pointed out, the whole police system is a branch of the civil service, in the broad sense of that term, and any antithesis of police and civilian is a false one. The three hundred or so clerks in the Commissioner's Office, together with the still larger body of clerks, and professional, technical and manual staff employed under the Receiver, form a Metropolitan police civil service, distinct from the general civil service of the Crown but organised on the lines of executive departments in it. Not being constables they are not members of the police force, but they are members of the police service and have been an integral part of the Metropolitan police organisation since 1829. The police office which Peel established at 4, Whitehall Place consisted of the justices (the Commissioners) and clerks, who formed the Commissioners' staff. Sir Richard Mayne's right-hand man was his chief clerk, Charles Yardley, who, as a member of the old Army Commissariat, had been present at Waterloo.

No civil service establishment on a comparable footing forms part of the police service elsewhere in England and Wales, because the central or head-quarter offices of other forces are too small to offer scope for an organisation on the Scotland Yard scale, and police administration in the counties and boroughs is linked with that of other departments of local administration.



The functions of civil servants and police at Scotland Yard are to a large extent interchangeable, and in the distribution of clerical work the policy of recent years has been to secure, as far as possible, that police officers, with their special powers, pay and pension privileges, shall not be used for sedentary office work, unless it is such as requires the status of a constable or previous experience of police duty, or is a necessary qualification for future police work.

The permanent members of the civil service staff at Scotland Yard are appointed by the Secretary of State; they help to maintain an effective liaison with the civil servants of the Home Office and supply an invaluable element of continuity and experience in policy and administration. The extent to which black coats predominate over blue at Scotland Yard (in the proportion of three civil servants to one policeman), is noteworthy, in view of the fear sometimes expressed that the administration of the Metropolitan police is conducted on less "civilian" lines than that of other forces.

## Chapter VI

### THE POLICE FORCE IN THE DIVISIONS

#### *Its Local Organisation, Duties and Life*

FROM the point of view of the public, the local aspects of Metropolitan police organisation and administration are of at least as much importance as those of Scotland Yard. In a force of about twenty thousand, distributed over an area of seven hundred square miles, in twenty-three divisions, about a hundred sub-divisions and two hundred stations, the actual control of the police in the execution of their duties and in their every-day relations with the community necessarily rests with those in charge locally. However efficient the supervision exercised from Scotland Yard, it is upon the local officers that the general conduct as well as the efficiency of the police must mainly depend.

In all British police forces the gradation of ranks in the local divisions is substantially the same, viz. superintendent, inspector, sergeant and constable,\* a general pattern of which the archetype is the organisation decided upon for the Metropolitan police in 1829. At the outset each local company of the new police consisted of a superintendent, four inspectors, and sixteen sergeants, each ser-

\* Superintendents were to be found before 1829 in the parochial police and inspectors in the Bow St. day patrol and the night watch of St. James's. "Sergeant" was borrowed from the Army.

geant having charge of a party of nine men, eight of whom patrolled beats and one remained in reserve at the station. This simple arrangement has gradually been overlaid by all sorts of complications. The two most important changes have been that local officers exercising control over groups of divisions have been introduced in the shape of the district chief constables, and the rank of inspector has been sub-divided into four grades—(1) chief inspector, (2) sub-divisional inspector, (3) inspector, and (4) station sergeant (a rank which corresponds to the “sub-inspector” of some other forces, and has in the Metropolitan police been called, at different times, station sergeant, sub-inspector, third-class inspector). If we include the C.I.D. inspectors, there are six grades in this rank, the divisional detective-inspector ranking next to the chief inspector, and the detective-inspector to the sub-divisional inspector.

The following diagram shows the gradation of ranks in the local organisation of the force :—

Chief Constables.	No. 1 District.	No. 2 District.	No. 3 District.	No. 4 District.																			
Superintendents of Divisions.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	K	L	M	N	P	R	S	T	V	W	X	Y	Z	Ta

Chief inspectors.

Divisional detective-inspectors.

Sub-divisional inspectors.

Detective-inspectors.

Inspectors.

Station sergeants.

Sergeants (Section sergeants).

Acting sergeants.

Constables.

### *The Chief Constables*

It was in 1869, after Sir Richard Mayne's death, that the divisions were grouped in four districts under four district Chief Constables (originally designated "District Superintendents"). Some of the reasons for this step have been indicated in the second chapter. The element of "educated control," in the sense of control by men such as Peel had chosen for his Commissioners, instead of being enlarged as the force grew and the relations of police and public became more complex, was reduced when, after 1855, one Commissioner took the place of two and the Assistant Commissioners were restricted to certain special functions. Notwithstanding the energy and great abilities of Sir Richard Mayne, the practical difficulties in the way of one man supervising 7,000 or 8,000, distributed over an area of 700 square miles, led to the actual control passing into the hands of the superintendents and inspectors (mostly of the sergeant-major type), to an extent far beyond what had originally been intended. The interpolation of Chief Constables between the Assistant Commissioners and the superintendents was regarded as being, to some extent, a concession to the view that the force should be provided with a proper cadre of "commissioned" officers, but officially its primary purpose was to effect a devolution of the work of dealing with defaulters (previously brought up to

Scotland Yard from all parts of the district to the number of fifty or sixty a week), while keeping it in the hands of those who were perhaps more likely to be impartial and to temper justice with mercy than superintendents promoted from the ranks who had been "through it" themselves.

The district Chief Constable\* in the Metropolitan police has been described by Mr. Fosdick, in his book *European Police Systems* (published in 1912), as the most important single feature of the organisation; and it is easy to see the importance of the post. The force, as a disciplined body, is controlled by the Commissioner, Assistant Commissioner "A," the four district Chief Constables and the twenty-three divisional superintendents. Without the Chief Constables there would obviously be a lack of gradation in passing from one Commissioner and one Assistant Commissioner to twenty-three superintendents. In Paris, the municipal or uniformed police, who are organised by *arrondissements*, on the model of the London divisional plan, number about 11,000 (or less than two-thirds of the uniformed strength of the Metropolitan police) and are controlled by a Director, two assistant Directors, ten divisional Commissaries and twenty-five *arrondissement* Commissaries, the last two

\* In the counties and boroughs the Chief Constable is the head of the force. In the Metropolitan police the Chief Constable was so called because (until the recent introduction of Deputy Assistant Commissioners) his was the highest rank of constable in the force, the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners being justices of the peace. In addition to the four district Chief Constables, there is a Chief Constable in the Criminal Investigation Department,

corresponding, as nearly as may be, to the London Chief Constables and divisional superintendents.

From the very first establishment of the Chief Constables in 1869, it has been constantly urged that more of them are required, in order to ensure sufficient touch between the heads of the force and the divisions, and to enlarge the element of educated control. Advocates of this change visualise an organisation something like that of Vienna, where there are (as in London) more than twenty divisions and about 200 police stations: each division is controlled by a police officer (a civil servant) of higher academic education, while the stations are under inspectors or station commandants promoted from the ranks of the constabulary. If there had been a similar system in London, an officer corresponding to a Chief Constable, appointed from outside the service, would have been in charge of each division, instead of a superintendent promoted from the ranks, but the question may be asked which system was more likely to have promoted understanding of and close contact with the populace. Although the force is now twice as large as in 1869, there are still only four district Chief Constables, and the tendency in the past has been to reduce rather than increase their numbers and responsibilities. They have found difficulty in fitting themselves in between the upper and lower parts of the Metropolitan police organisation—the justices at Scotland Yard (Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners) and the police in the divisions. At different times there have been only three or two, and they have in the past attached

themselves to headquarters rather than to the divisions. Apart from matters of discipline, their work has been mainly of an advisory character, without actual executive responsibility, except in special emergencies, such as the General Strike of 1926, when a position of leadership devolves upon them. There has been dispute as to the extent to which they should be local officers, with functions corresponding somewhat to brigadiers in the Army, or inspecting officers working from headquarters. The correct answer seems to be that they are something of both. They supervise the work of the divisional officers and they take command when large bodies of police are assembled; at the same time, their position in relation to Scotland Yard on the one side and the divisions on the other is, in some respects, not unlike that of the Inspectors of Constabulary to the Home Office and the provincial forces. They have been described as the eyes and ears of the Commissioner as to what goes on in the divisions, and this purpose can, it is generally thought, best be served if they work from a local office, as has been the rule since 1918.

Another question debated in the case of the Chief Constables of the Metropolitan police is one which arises with regard to the higher posts in the police service generally and has already been touched upon in dealing with the Commissionership—should the posts be filled by naval or military officers or persons similarly qualified, or by promotion of men who have entered by way of the ranks? All the district Chief Constables appointed between 1886, (when the post was revived after a period of semi-

extinction) and 1918 were Colonels, Majors or Captains. In 1918\* two superintendents were promoted to be Chief Constables, and at present two are ex-Army officers, and three, including the Chief Constable of the C.I.D., are promoted superintendents. It is sufficient to say here that the post, like other senior positions in the police service, is one which requires a high standard of education, breadth of outlook and knowledge of the world, together with the power of handling and influencing men. It also calls for an instinctive sense of what is honourable and fair, such as is, or should be, inseparable from an officer and a gentleman but is not his monopoly.

The district Chief Constables have oversight of the discipline, efficiency and interior economy of the force. They take every opportunity of seeing how charges are dealt with and prisoners treated, and have the special duty of investigating complaints by the public against the police. The superintendent of a division, as explained in the previous chapter, can dispose of minor offences against discipline by the lower ranks; other offences and all complaints by the public are referred to the Chief Constable, who thus acts as an appellate authority from the superintendents and inspectors. This arrangement ensures to every constable and to members of the public impartial investigation of a

\* It should be mentioned, however, that of the four District Superintendents appointed in 1869 two were Army officers (of whom one had been a prison governor), one an Indian police officer and the fourth a promoted superintendent who had joined as a constable in 1836.



case, free from any bias that might be imputed to those more directly concerned. If a case is so serious as to require hearing by a Discipline Board at Scotland Yard, a Chief Constable is a member of the Board.

### *The Superintendent*

Under his Chief Constable the divisional superintendent controls his division for all purposes and is responsible, subject only to the limitations on his power of inflicting punishment, for the discipline and work of all branches. He is the executive officer at the head of the division, a responsibility which the introduction of Chief Constables lessened in certain respects only. In practice, the actual direction of the detective work rests with the superior officers of the C.I.D., but all reports or communications to or from the divisions have to go through the divisional superintendent, so that he may be kept informed of all that happens in his division.

The divisional superintendent has been described as the pivot of the Metropolitan police administration, and, in many ways, he is the outstanding feature of the whole organisation. In the number of men he commands and the extent of the area under his control, he corresponds to a chief constable of a large city or borough. The post is one that demands not only experience and ability but also certain qualities of character, and the present system has been criticised on the ground that it is not the one best calculated to ensure that a superintendent always possesses these qualities. There is

undoubtedly room for improvement in existing methods of qualifying for the higher posts in the divisional organisation of the Metropolitan police.

It is, however, no exaggeration to say that it is the superintendents, more than anyone else, who have made the Metropolitan police what they are. The post has invariably been filled by promotion, a plan which has ensured that a superintendent shall be a man whose mettle has been tried by long years of hard service and who has been picked out from the thousands of his fellow constables. His previous career will have given him a wide experience of police work. As often as not, the first step up of a constable who is destined to be a superintendent is selection for employment in the divisional office, where he will presently become that important individual, the divisional clerk (with rank of clerk-sergeant) who sees and hears and knows everything about the division. From clerk-sergeant he passes to inspector and outdoor duty again, and so up through the increasing responsibilities of the inspector's grades.

There is a meeting of divisional superintendents at Scotland Yard every Wednesday (on which day they draw the pay of their division from the Receiver), and other visits are frequently made to headquarters for conference amongst themselves or with the Commissioner and Assistant Commissioners, or to serve on the Committees that are constantly set up to advise the Commissioner on questions affecting the force as a whole. The divisions are thus kept in touch with each other and with headquarters, a uniform system of carrying out police duties is

ensured, and Scotland Yard has the benefit of each superintendent's intimate knowledge of the practical needs and working of his division.

Scotland Yard and the divisions are also linked by a comprehensive system of daily orders and reports. New regulations, instructions, promotions, retirements, rewards, punishments, resolutions presented to the Commissioner by the police representative boards and his decisions thereon, and other matters of general interest or importance are brought to the notice of the whole force by means of the daily Police Orders, which are read to the men by the station officer when they parade for duty. Police despatch cars run between Scotland Yard and the divisions at scheduled hours, and special communications from headquarters are also sent by means of special messengers or through the telegraph office at Scotland Yard.

The superintendents, on their side, are required to send every morning to Scotland Yard four detailed reports: (1) the Morning Report of occurrences, which gives particulars of all important occurrences in the division during the previous twenty-four hours, (2) the supplementary Morning Report, which relates to defaulters, resignations and deaths, (3) the Morning Report of Crime, which contains details of every crime (i.e. each indictable offence) which has become known to the police in the previous twenty-four hours, and (4) the Morning State, which sets out the actual state of each division (i.e. the numbers absent sick or on leave, etc.) with particulars of special variations, special inquiries, etc. The Commissioner and the Assistant Commis-

sioners have thus before them every morning a complete survey of the divisions from all points of view.

### *Inspectors and Station Officers*

Below the superintendent every division has its chief inspector and a varying number of sub-divisional inspectors, inspectors and sergeants. The chief inspector is the superintendent's deputy; he is a hard-worked individual who is in charge when the superintendent is off duty, assists him by frequent patrolling, making inquiries and in many other ways. He is the mentor who supervises the training of young constables.

The number of sub-divisions and sub-divisional inspectors in a division depends upon its size and complexity. The sub-divisional inspector is responsible for the general efficiency and discipline of his sub-division, supervises all the stations in it, co-ordinates their work and sees to the arrangement and execution of the several duties. He is expected to make himself acquainted with the character, habits and special qualifications of all serving under him.

The sub-division is further sub-divided as between stations. Each police station, speaking generally, is always in the charge of an officer of the rank of inspector or station sergeant, who is known as "the station officer." A station officer commonly resides at the station, and when on duty divides his time between attending to the business of the station and patrolling the streets, to observe the manner in which the sergeants and constables are

carrying out their duties. At the station the station officer has to deal with any prisoners brought in, and he sees to the safe custody and proper treatment of all persons detained there. He also has to attend to inquiries and applications by members of the public. At a busy station the charge room (where charges are taken) may be continually in use and one caller succeed another at the public counter of the inspector's office all day long and for a considerable part of the night.

In dealing with charges the station officer's functions are strictly limited. During the early years of the Metropolitan police, station officers had discretion to dispose of charges of drunkenness by dismissing the offender with a caution, and some twenty or thirty thousand "drunks" were thus dealt with annually. This exercise of quasi-magisterial functions was objected to before the parliamentary Committee of 1833-1834 and was discontinued. Thereafter it was clearly laid down in the General Orders of the Metropolitan police that the powers of a station officer are not magisterial but executive only. Once a charge, whether made by a constable or a private individual, has been accepted and entered upon the charge sheet, it can be disposed of only by a magistrate. This regulation is one of the fundamental principles of the English police system, and it has the corollary that the police alone are responsible for the acceptance of a charge, with the inevitable consequence that the person has to make a public appearance in Court.

Suggestions have been made that in difficult cases there should be some private inquiry by :

magistrate before the police accept a charge, with all the publicity which it may entail. These were rejected by the Royal Commission on the Metropolitan police in 1908, as tending to convert the police magistrate, who in England is independent of the police, into their adviser, and thus make him to some extent responsible for the prosecution. Such a change would be inconsistent with that complete severance of the executive functions of the police from the judicial functions of the magistrate which has been rigidly maintained since 1839.

The station officer's discretion in regard to the acceptance of a charge makes his post a responsible one. Although he is not called upon to try the case in any way, he must satisfy himself that the act charged constitutes an offence against statutory or common law and that there is reasonable ground for preferring the complaint. The offence must be one for which the law allows arrest without a warrant and the charge must be supported by *prima facie* credible evidence. His discretion has usually to be exercised without reference to a superior officer, as a prisoner must be dealt with at once and released on bail as soon as possible, if the circumstances appear to justify this course. Any inquiries that the prisoner's statement may suggest must be made at once, if practicable, and his solicitor or friends must be informed of his arrest, if he desires it.

In carrying out these requirements the station officer may find himself between Scylla and Charybdis. On the one hand, he may be committing an outrage on British liberty by detaining someone who ought to be at once admitted to bail :

on the other, by allowing his prisoner out, he may let a dangerous criminal abscond. If he errs in one direction, there may be a scandal which will involve not only himself but the whole Metropolitan police service in opprobrium, and may result in valuable parts of police procedure being dug up by the roots and replanted in a manner which will make his task more delicate and difficult than ever. Contrariwise, if he lets a criminal escape, before there has been time to identify him or to make any inquiries that should be made, he will certainly hear about it from his superiors and, what is more important, the public will suffer, while the criminal will go on his way rejoicing.

It should be added that there is one important mitigation of the station officer's responsibilities. In the more serious criminal cases the decision as to the course of proceedings will usually rest with the C.I.D. and the taking of the charge at the station by the station officer will be a formal matter.

### *Sergeants and Constables : The police station*

Every police station has a certain area of ground assigned to it, and all sergeants and constables, apart from those employed at headquarters and on certain special duties, are attached to a station, where they parade for duty and receive the necessary orders and instructions. For patrolling and other purposes the station's area is divided into sections under the charge of sergeants, and sections into beats patrolled by constables.

The section sergeant is responsible for the general good conduct and good order of the constables

under him and is expected to know the character of each. He parades his men fifteen minutes before the hour at which they go on duty, marches out with them and sees that each takes over his allotted beat or post. During the whole of the time that they are on duty constables are under the surveillance of their sergeant, who is required to patrol his section and constantly visit all the constables on it, a supervision which is reinforced by visits from the station officer or the sub-divisional inspector on his round.

The normal duty of a uniformed constable is to patrol his beat, but he may be employed as a special patrol (in plain clothes or uniform), or on point duty. A point is either a fixed point, at which a constable is stationed for the protection of the neighbourhood (in many cases in conjunction with a telephone box, known as a "Fixed Point Box," from which he can communicate with or be called up by his station), or a traffic point, at which he stands to control traffic, this being the purpose for which the majority of pointsmen are employed nowadays. There are various other outdoor duties and, in the interests of efficiency and to guard against undue association with particular individuals or places, men are constantly moved from beat to beat and from one duty to another.

In order that a constable may afterwards be able to give an accurate account of anything that has happened during his tour of duty, he is supplied with a pocket-book with numbered pages. In this he is required to note at the time, or as soon after as possible, the hour, date and other particulars



of any occurrence, together with the names and addresses of parties concerned, witnesses, etc., and their statements, if any, in the exact words used. From these notes he writes out in his pocket-book a fuller account, which forms the basis of any subsequent reports and has to be submitted to and initialled by his sergeant ; it is also copied into the Occurrence Book at the station by the station officer. Note-books often have to be produced in a Court of Law and must be carefully kept. Occurrence Books are kept at all stations, so that there may be a complete daily record of all occurrences, etc., at the station or within the area assigned to it. All irregularities and unusual incidents have to be entered in the "O.B.," as it is called, and it is also the repository of innumerable records of routine happenings.

A special form of police duty, for which men are selected from those who volunteer for it, is employment at Police Courts and Petty Sessional Courts, as gaolers, to take charge of the prisoners, and as warrant officers, to execute warrants, summonses and other orders of the magistrates. Police so employed remain members of the force and subject to the usual control and discipline, but, for the time being, they form part of the police court staff and are responsible to the magistrates for the proper execution of their special tasks. Independently of this special police court employment, members of the force attend the police courts in considerable numbers daily to prosecute or give evidence in cases in which they are concerned. An inspector is always present in general charge of the sergeants and constables

in court, but each policeman is the prosecutor in his own case, and it is only in difficult cases that the police solicitors or counsel are employed to prosecute.

Somewhat analogous to police court duty is employment as a prison van sergeant, in charge of one of the vans (known as "Black Marias" in the old days, but now blue motor vans) which convey prisoners to and from police stations, police courts and prisons.

### *Promotion*

All promotions in the force are by selection and examination and are made by the Commissioner. For the ranks of sub-divisional inspector, chief inspector and superintendent, the Commissioner acts on the advice of a Selection Committee, composed of Assistant Commissioner "A" and the four district Chief Constables, assisted by the superintendent from "A<sub>3</sub>" department. For the lower ranks a man has to be recommended by his superintendent and the Chief Constable. Promotion for all ranks up to that of chief inspector is subject to passing qualifying examinations in general education and police duty; the former are conducted by the Civil Service Commissioners, and the examination in police duty cannot be taken unless and until the requisite educational examination has been passed.\* The examinations in police duty are conducted by a departmental board, consisting of a

\* The educational examinations (in which half marks must be obtained to pass), are in writing, including composition, arithmetic, geography and a paper designed to test a man's general knowledge and intelligence.

Chief Constable and four superintendents. The marks required to qualify are 75 per cent. of the total, and the examination increases in difficulty with each advancement in rank.

A constable cannot be promoted to the rank of sergeant until he has had at least five years' service, and, if he is to be promoted at all, he must pass his examinations within his first eight years. These requirements should be borne in mind by those who think that all constables tend to be over-zealous in order to secure promotion. The older constables who have not qualified for promotion, in the manner indicated, cannot make up for this failure by their "bag" of convictions or other similar achievements.

A sergeant cannot be advanced to the next rank of station sergeant unless he qualifies for it before he has had seventeen years' service. The general rule is to require three years' service as section sergeant and three years as station sergeant before promotion to the next rank, but exception is made for men of outstanding ability.

There are in the Metropolitan police at present about 3,700 posts above the rank of constable (in a force of 20,000), and, once his first five years are passed, promotion is rapid for a well conducted and capable officer.

### *Life at the station—Section Houses and Married Quarters.*

The police station is the centre of a constable's life as well as of his work. He goes to it for meetings or for social purposes. Nowadays, all except the smaller stations have billiard rooms for general use,

and there is usually a canteen, managed by the Metropolitan Police Central Canteens Committee, where liquid refreshment, tobacco, groceries, etc., can be obtained. In the inner divisions the single men reside in quarters known as "Section Houses," which generally form part of, or adjoin a station: in the outer divisions, where the number attached to any station will usually be small, single men live in private lodgings. In a Section House each constable has a separate cubicle in a dormitory which is centrally heated; in the more modern buildings he has a separate bedroom. There is a Messroom for meals, with facilities for a man to cook his own breakfast (dinner being provided by a common Mess), a library, a drying room, boot room, baths, kitchen, etc.

As regards the married men,\* the general policy has been to leave them to find their own accommodation. It was considered better that the married police should live distributed among the population as ordinary citizens and not be segregated when off duty. Accordingly married quarters were provided only for station officers, but the policy has been modified in recent years, mainly because of the difficulty experienced by the married policeman in finding suitable living accommodation near his work. There is, however, also the consideration that in the inner divisions reinforcements may be suddenly required in an emergency, and policemen marry so soon nowadays, on their largely increased

\* More than four-fifths of the force are married men. Before the War the usual proportions were two-thirds married and one-third single.

pay, that the single men residing in Section Houses no longer afford a sufficient reserve for this contingency. The great majority of the married men still live in their own houses or private lodgings, but in a number of places in central London large blocks of married police quarters or flats have now been provided, the comfort and convenience of which are unsurpassed by the housing provision made by any other public authority for its employees. If a married officer is not housed in police quarters, he receives, in addition to his pay, an allowance sufficient, on the average, to cover what he may have to pay in rent.

### *Police Clothing and Equipment*

The equipment of a Metropolitan police constable is not without interest. His helmet, which replaced the old beaver hat in 1864, is the most characteristic part of his outfit and was chosen as being both a covering for the head and a protection against blows or missiles. Caps are worn by superintendents and inspectors and also by the mounted branch, the river police, police motor drivers, etc. In winter and on dress occasions the police uniform consists of a blue cloth tunic and trousers, with greatcoat for night duty and cold weather. With the tunic is worn a leather belt on which is carried the lantern. In summer a serge jacket replaces the tunic. A policeman's boots are naturally a very important matter; difficulties of individual fitting are disposed of by allowing him to provide his own, out of an allowance of 1s. a week for the purpose.

When a sergeant or constable is on duty he wears

on his left arm, just above the wrist, a blue and white striped armlet, and he is strictly forbidden to remove the armlet at any time before the end of his tour of duty. (The City of London police wear a red and white armlet.) On the collar of the tunic, jacket and greatcoat and on the helmet, are a metal number and the letter of the man's division, so that anyone may take note of them. For a constable to refuse his number, if properly asked for, is a serious offence against discipline.

Normally, a constable is armed with a wooden truncheon (of cocus wood) fifteen inches long, with a leather strap to secure it round his wrist. Save on ceremonial occasions, swords are not worn by any rank, and pistols are kept only at stations, to be issued in special cases where there is reason to apprehend encounters with armed criminals. The mounted policeman has a longer truncheon (carried in a leather case), to give him sufficient reach without unseating himself.

A wooden truncheon or staff is the traditional weapon of the constable in this country.\* An armed policeman would be inconsistent with the English idea that a constable's authority should be exercised by carrying the methods of persuasion to their utmost limits. At the same time persuasion has its limits, and the constable represents the ultimate basis of physical force on which the rule of law is founded, and he must be equipped accordingly. It is,

\* The fact that the new police had only small truncheons against the bludgeons or poles or shillelaghs of the mob gained for them in their early years a respect and a reputation for fair play that could not have been won by a besworded and bepistoled police.

however, laid down in Metropolitan police orders that the use of the truncheon is not to be resorted to except in extreme cases, and whenever a constable uses his truncheon he has to submit it to the station officer for subsequent inspection; if he uses it against a prisoner, the fact has to be mentioned when the prisoner is charged, and it must also be given in evidence at Court. It will be a surprise to many to learn that handcuffs are hardly ever used; they are kept, like pistols, at stations to be used only for violent prisoners.

Down to 1885\* the Metropolitan policeman carried a rattle, which was not without its uses as a reserve truncheon and which he "sprang" in circumstances in which he would now blow his whistle. Since the practice of whistling for cabs has been stopped the policeman's whistle has once more become a useful means of giving the alarm and obtaining help.

More often in use than truncheons, swords, revolvers or whistles is the little pocket *vade-mecum* called "Duty Hints." It is an alphabetical compendium of a constable's powers and duties under subject headings such as accidents, aliens, animals, assaults, and so on. A little pocket directory is also carried which tells a constable all he needs to know about hospitals, fire stations, coroners, veterinary surgeons, workhouses, etc., and includes instructions for first aid in cases of accident, drowning or illness. It is important that a constable's report should cover

\* The rattle was not replaced by the whistle on night duty until 1887.

all material points, and the very careful instruction he receives in the matter of reports results in a certain standardisation of police diction which is often a matter of comment. There is in circulation a little book of specimen reports for various contingencies; in these, however, it is what the public say to the police that has a certain sameness about it. The imaginary dialogues, given by way of illustration, show that when a member of the public is told by a constable that he will be summoned he is usually expected to retort "You must be looking for a job," or "You must be wanting a case." This may perhaps be tendered as some indication that the police are made aware of the general dislike of busy-bodies.

*Police and Military Discipline and Organisation Compared.*

In conclusion something may be said as to the difference between military and police discipline and organisation.

In an infantry battalion, the strength of which corresponds approximately to the average strength of a division of the Metropolitan police, 3 per cent. are commissioned officers, 5 per cent. warrant officers and sergeants and 92 per cent. rank and file. In a police division there is one superintendent, 3 per cent. are inspectors, 14 per cent. sergeants, and 83 per cent. constables, and much the same proportions hold good generally as regards other police forces in England and Wales.

It is a commonplace that discipline in a police force is very different from military discipline.



The latter aims at cohesion and implicit obedience to the word of command, whereas discipline means for the police strict regularity, unrelenting vigilance and the exercise of proper judgment by every constable in the execution of his individual duty. The fact that a constable is the holder of a public office for the faithful execution of which he has a personal responsibility makes his position altogether different from that of a soldier. The individual nature of the constable's task, and the risk of his neglecting his duty or abusing his powers, necessitate, for purposes of supervision, a number of inspectors and sergeants much in excess of the number of non-commissioned officers required in the Army where one man can control fifty because they act as a body.

In the Army the commissioned officer's function is mainly that of training the troops for the eventuality of actual operations in war and leading them in the field ; discipline, without which training would be ineffective, is (apart from the question of punishment) to a large extent the province of the non-commissioned officers. In the police there is nothing that corresponds to Army training ; the police are always in the field, but comparatively little leading is required.

The police system as regards the enforcement of ordinary discipline seems, at first sight, much the same as in the Army, that is to say, it rests with inspectors and sergeants, who may be compared in this respect with the non-commissioned officers of a battalion. The position of a section sergeant in the Metropolitan police differs, however, from that

of a sergeant in the Army. There is no rank of corporal or lance-corporal in the police, and the sergeant is in close and intimate relations with the men under him. In some cases this has not been conducive to discipline and has given rise to the criticism that a mistaken and undesirable *esprit de corps* prevails in the police. On the occasion of the 1918 strike, 328 sergeants joined the strikers and only one inspector. Promotion in the Metropolitan police, however, always involves transfer from one division to another, so that a newly promoted sergeant ought not to be hampered by any ties he may have previously formed as a constable.

Finally, it may be stressed that, under the English police system, the actual performance of police duties is supervised by those who have themselves served in the ranks and had long practical experience of the work. It has already been pointed out in the second chapter that one of the fundamental principles on which Peel established his new police, was that every grade up to the highest (the superintendent) should be filled by those who had joined at the bottom and made their way up step by step. This was to prevent the efficiency of his new force from being ruined by the all-prevalent jobbery to which even the humblest public appointments were then exposed, but it was also a natural consequence of the fact that the police were a body of constables, all possessed of exactly the same legal status and powers. The problem was not one of distributing functions of command on military lines, but that of providing for the supervision of some constables by others of greater experience,

trustworthiness and capacity. The ancient office of constable is thus not only the bedrock on which the modern police system was founded and has since been maintained, but it is also the essence of the non-military character of the English police.

## Chapter VII

### THE DETECTIVE POLICE

*Their History. Persistence of the Old Prejudice  
Against Detectives.*

*The Establishment and First Years of the C.I.D.*

For the first thirteen years there was no detective branch in the Metropolitan police. Down to 1839 the Bow Street runners and the constables of the seven police offices established in 1792 continued in existence and were regarded as the experts in crime detection or "thieftaking," but they were so only to a very small extent.

Criminal investigation, that is to say, the function of making inquiry into the circumstances of a crime and collecting information with a view to tracing and prosecuting the criminal, was, under the old system, one of the duties of justice and constable. It had, however, been very much neglected, outside of the limited sphere within which the Bow Street runners operated, and its revival was one of the great improvements that followed on the establishment of the Metropolitan police.

The Bow Street runners were more of a private detective agency than a public service. As a witness before the parliamentary Committee of 1837 put it, they "were private speculators in the detection of crime rather than efficient officers for the ends of justice." They moved when they

were sufficiently paid to do so, and, although normally only eight in number, they did not confine themselves to London, being available to the highest bidder for their services in any part of the country. Their official salary of a guinea a week was just a retaining fee, and the actual remuneration in any case was privately agreed upon.

From the beginning it was the duty of the Metropolitan police, immediately a crime was reported to them, to institute an investigation, regardless of whether there was anyone to prosecute or meet the cost of inquiries. The contrast between the Bow Street system and that of the new police was illustrated by the division of labour during the ten years (1829-1839) that the runners and the new police co-existed: the runners took the jewel robberies and left the murders to the Metropolitan police. All the murderers were traced, but only a sixth of the jewel thieves were brought to justice.

There was, however, a widespread opinion, which found support even at the Home Office, that the new police, however excellent for the prevention of crime and the preservation of order, were not up to the work of "thieftaking" or "thiefcatching," which was looked upon as a peculiar art or craft or mystery, requiring long years of initiation as well as special aptitude. The police magistrates, and especially the Chief Magistrate, Sir Richard Birnie, who were naturally partial to the old system over which they presided and jealous of the new, tried, so far as possible, to grant warrants

only to the old constables, so as to keep the tracking down, or at least the arrest of criminals, in their hands.

There was also the difficulty that any attempt to organise a detective police would have been denounced as involving espionage and an imitation of foreign methods. Political espionage was one of the main purposes which the French police system had served both under the *ancien régime* and Napoleon. A semi-official detective corps had come into existence in Paris in 1810, when the notorious Vidocq, an ex-criminal turned police agent, was allowed to organise a band of other gaol-birds, as a *brigade de sûreté*, who informed against their old associates and had the reputation of arranging or instigating many of the crimes they detected. The Bow Street runners were not ex-criminals, but they were hand-in-glove with the criminal classes and consorted with them in the "flash houses." In the new police there was a strict prohibition of such practices; no constable was allowed to associate with known bad characters, or to use his own discretion as to the means of obtaining information.\*

Lastly, the fact that the new police were a uniformed force had certain consequences. Uniform for police was rather an innovation. Some of the Bow Street police had been conspicuous in blue coats and red waistcoats, but the foot patrol wore anything they liked. The parish constables had no

\* Of course it still remained the case that information about crime was (and always will be) obtained mainly from the criminal classes.

uniform, the only thing that distinguished them being a staff or truncheon. In short, the old police were policemen in plain clothes, but once uniform had been adopted for the new police, plain clothes became a disguise and were viewed with suspicion, as the mark of a secret police. In consequence, down to 1869 the Metropolitan police were subject to almost military regulations in this respect, and could not appear in mufti, even when off duty, without special permission.\*

It was obvious, however, almost from the start, that some police duty could not be performed so well in uniform as out of it, and the Secretary of State gave discretion to the Commissioners to employ selected constables occasionally in plain clothes, mainly for keeping observation on pickpockets and beggars. The manner in which they exercised this discretion was called in question in 1833, in connection with the famous Popay case. Popay was an intelligent police-constable in Walworth, who, in his zeal to obtain information as to revolutionary activities, took a too active and well-acted part as a pretended adherent of the National Political Union of the Working Classes. A Select Committee of the House of Commons inquired into the case and (with one dissentient, the redoubtable Cobbett), exonerated the Commissioners of Police from the imputation that they had countenanced the employment of spies, but they censured Popay (who was dismissed) for "carrying conceal-

\* On the other hand, in order to express the civilian character of the police, the Commissioners were not allowed a uniform until 1839.

ment and deceit into the intercourse of private life." They laid it down that the employment of police in plain clothes ought to be strictly confined to detecting breaches of the law and preventing breaches of the peace, if these objects were otherwise unattainable; to go beyond this was "most abhorrent to the feeling of the people and most alien to the spirit of the constitution."

Although the new police, as a whole, came well out of the Popay inquiry, the case undoubtedly had a discouraging effect as regards the further development of the detective side of police work. In 1839 the Bow Street runners ceased to exist, and London had to manage without regular detectives in 1840 and 1841. In 1842 occurred the famous murder by Daniel Good, and the fact that he escaped arrest for some time led to considerable criticism of the police, with unfavourable comparisons between them and the defunct Bow Street runners. The Commissioners were able to show that the detective operations of the new police had been much more effective than those of the runners ever were, but at the same time they persuaded a reluctant Home Secretary, Sir James Graham, to sanction, as a cautious experiment, the formation of a small detective branch (two inspectors and six sergeants) with an office in Scotland Yard. These men were entertained by Dickens at the office of *Household Words* in 1850: they are described in the articles in that journal on "The modern science of thieftaking," and they inspired the character (in *Bleak House*) of Inspector Bucket "of the Detective," who indicated the eternal



basis of successful detective operations when he explained to Sir Leicester Dedlock, Baronet, that he "had gone to work from information received."\* Dickens summed up the Bow Street runners and their "vast amount of humbug" in a few masterly sentences, of which the last may serve as their epitaph: "Although as a preventive police they were utterly ineffective and as a detective police they were very loose and uncertain in their operations, they remain with some people a superstition to the present day."†

The activities of the new detectives were, for the most part, confined to London, but their number must have been inadequate from the beginning. The strength of the old prejudice against detectives can be gauged from the fact that it was not until 1864 that there was any increase in the permanent detective establishment, and in 1868, when Sir Richard Mayne died, it was just a small branch of the Commissioner's Office, fifteen strong in a force nearly eight thousand. This handful of men dealt with the more important cases and carried out special inquiries. Ordinary local crime was handled by the divisional police, but there was no definite organisation, or special pay for the work, and the

\* Sergeant Cuff in Wilkie Collins' *The Moonstone* is another, somewhat florid, picture of a detective officer of the period between the passing of the Bow Street runners and the coming of the C.I.D. One still pertinent remark of his was that "even in the detective police a man has a reputation to lose." The most striking pictorial representation of detectives of the 'sixties is that in Frith's well-known painting, "The Railway Station," in which two handsome top-hatted gentlemen are the arresting figures.

† Dickens' opinion of Bow Street also found expression in the characters of Mr. Fang and Blathers and Duff in *Oliver Twist*.

selection of officers for it was haphazard and casual.

At a quarter to four on the afternoon of Friday, the 13th December, 1867, a barrel of gunpowder was exploded against the wall of the exercise yard of the old Clerkenwell House of Detention. The explosion, besides more or less wrecking a street of houses, killed and injured a number of innocent men, women and children. The outrage caused the greatest excitement and alarm everywhere. Taken in conjunction with other recent activities by the Fenians (The Irish Republican Brotherhood), it was thought to portend a widespread campaign of terrorism, although, in the event, it proved to be an isolated crime by a few reckless and ignorant Irishmen, who merely designed to make a hole in a wall through which a prisoner detained on remand might get away. Queen Victoria urged the Government to suspend the Habeas Corpus Act for three months, a request which the Prime Minister (Lord Derby) met by the more practical step of a large increase in the Metropolitan police, whom he described, in a letter to Her Majesty, as "overworked and dispirited" and "especially deficient as a detective force." Under the new Commissioner (Sir E. Henderson, 1869-1886), part of this augmentation of the force was used for the creation of a detective establishment covering the whole district, and the existing detective branch at headquarters became the central office of the new organisation. The new detectives were instructed that their primary duty was to make themselves thoroughly acquainted with the criminal population of their districts—by the method of diligent observation, and not by familiar association, as under the Bow Street system. In

that portion of the General Orders of the Metropolitan police which deals with criminal investigation, first place has ever since been given to observation as the indispensable factor in the prevention and detection of crime. Observation, it may be explained, does not involve elaborate disguises, but merely requires that the detective's get-up should be in accordance with his surroundings—Nature's camouflage. Another part of the detective system which dates from 1869 is the employment of special winter patrols—detachments of plain clothes men drawn from the uniformed force during the dark winter months, to keep watch in any areas where house-breakings, burglaries or other offences are specially prevalent.

It may be mentioned that in 1868 motives of economy and recognition of the intermittent character of detective work led the Secretary of State and the Commissioner to entertain for a time a plan for employing suitable persons on detective work, occasionally or permanently, without making them police officers. The idea was, however, abandoned, in view of its probably fatal resemblance to the continental practice of employing professional police spies or "indicateurs." In this country the indispensable informant has always remained an out-of-pocket expense and public opinion would not tolerate his promotion to be a salaried retainer.

That Scotland Yard was alive to the risks of reviving the cry of "espionage" may be gathered from the doubtful welcome which the new detective force received in the Commissioner's report for 1869, Scotland Yard's first Annual Report. "There are

many great difficulties," wrote Sir Edmund Henderson, "in the way of a detective system; it is viewed with the greatest suspicion and jealousy by the majority of Englishmen and is, in fact, entirely foreign to the habits and feelings of the nation."

The system, however, was to suffer at first more from internal weakness than outside criticism. Many of the divisional superintendents were not well disposed to the idea of having a separate class of detective officers in their divisions, and they took no pains to select suitable men for the work. Co-operation between the central office at Scotland Yard and the local detectives, or between one division and another, was almost non-existent, and there were deplorable leakages of information. This state of affairs was brought to light as a result of the inquiry which followed the great Scotland Yard scandal\* of 1877, when three of the highest officers in the central office were found guilty of conspiring with a gang of swindlers in the carrying on of fraudulent betting agencies. The disclosures, said the Attorney-General at their trial, "came as a thunderclap to the community and spread over England the greatest possible alarm," which was putting it rather high.

A Committee was appointed to inquire into the detective service and they were impressed by a report on the detective organisation of the Paris police which was submitted to them by Mr. Howard Vincent (afterwards Sir Howard Vincent, M.P.), a young barrister who had made a special study of the subject. The efficiency of the French system was

\* Full details of this will be found in "The Trial of the Detectives" by George Dilnot.

considered to be largely attributable to the centralisation which then characterised it but has since been greatly modified. The Committee accordingly recommended that the Metropolitan police should have a united and separate detective force. It was thus that a Criminal Investigation Department (the C.I.D.) was created in March, 1878,\* under Mr. Vincent. He was appointed Director of Criminal Investigation (a translation of the French "*Directeur des Recherches Criminelles*"), to organise the new department. Extensive changes were made at Scotland Yard; the divisional detective staffs were reconstituted under inspectors, and special rates of pay were sanctioned for the C.I.D. so as to attract the best men.

The new department encountered a great deal of opposition. There was disaffection among the uniformed men, because of the extra pay given to the plain clothes branch, and it was rumoured that the detectives were to spy on the rest of the force, as in Paris, where plain clothes men attached to the bureau known as the "*contrôle générale*" exercised a secret surveillance over other police officers. Some of the divisional superintendents sympathised with the rank and file in this matter, and complained that the detectives in the divisions were no longer under their control and that responsi-

\* This reorganisation of the detective service of the Metropolitan Police on the Paris model was a return of the compliment which Napoleon III paid to us in 1854 when he adopted a new local organisation of the uniformed police of the French capital, in imitation of London's divisional system. In 1912 the detective service in Paris was decentralised and detectives distributed in local companies on the London plan.

bility for the criminal side of police work had been taken entirely out of their hands.

There was undoubtedly an idea at first of making the C.I.D. an entirely separate organisation, as in Paris, and the Director was given almost *carte blanche* to carry out any change he thought fit. The experience of the previous decade, however, had driven home the lesson that no police system can succeed without the closest co-operation between all branches and all ranks, and it was eventually laid down, in the autumn of 1878, that, while the detectives were to carry out their duties according to the instructions of the superior officers in their own branch, C.I.D. cases would pass through the divisional superintendent, so that he should retain a general responsibility for all police work in his division. This "treaty of alliance" has been the basis of the relationship between the detective and the uniformed branches ever since.

An experiment, which was not persisted in for long, was that of appointing gentlemen of good education and social standing as detectives. In the early days of the detective branch, persons regarded as having special aptitude or training for detective work were occasionally appointed direct to the branch, and this plan was tried again in the period 1878-1884, but the "gentlemen detectives" were failures—no doubt from want of a preliminary training as policemen—and it has since been the invariable rule to recruit the detectives from men who have joined the force as ordinary constables and served a short time in the uniformed ranks.

In 1880 Scotland Yard, and the C.I.D. in particular, came under the strong and wise guidance of

Sir William Harcourt at the Home Office ; and the first of several crises in police matters with which he had to deal was that which arose in connection with the case of the chemist Titley. Titley was brought to justice by police officers pretending to seek his aid in procuring an abortion. A similar proceeding by the police in another case ten years earlier had passed without challenge, but the Titley case raised a storm, and the police were actually indicted (though the indictment was quashed), for criminal conspiracy. Severe criticism of Scotland Yard's detective methods, from the Bench as well as the public, led the Home Secretary to make a pronouncement in the House of Commons which was memorable for its repudiation of *agent provocateur* methods and its recognition of public opinion as the touchstone of police practice in this country. In regretting and excusing the action of the police, on the ground that proof of such crimes as Titley's might otherwise be forthcoming only after a life had been sacrificed, Sir William Harcourt said that, however great this evil, a greater was the danger that the confidence of the public might be shaken in the good faith of the police, and that "the cases in which it is necessary or justifiable for the police to resort to artifice of the description practised in this case must be rare indeed. As a rule, the police ought not to set traps for people." In a fuller memorandum in the Home Office papers he added : "This is consonant, I believe, with the temper of the English people, even though they know that they have to pay the price in the defectiveness of their detective system."

It is unfortunately more necessary than it used to be for the police to "set traps" for people, in the sense of obtaining evidence of illegal proceedings by pretending to take part in them or otherwise putting persons off their guard and allowing them to commit themselves. Such actions cannot, without an abuse of language, be called incitements to crime, though they may be criticised as, in some degree, inconsistent with Sir William Harcourt's pronouncement. Measures of the kind indicated are employed only where there is definite and reliable information that offences are being habitually committed and evidence to justify an arrest or support a prosecution is unobtainable by other means. For the police to ignore defiance of the law because it is committed behind doors would obviously be impossible: public opinion would not tolerate a "do nothing" policy in regard to habitual offences merely because they cannot be prosecuted without recourse to subterfuge in order to obtain the necessary evidence.\*

Notwithstanding the Titley case and other troubles, the C.I.D. fully justified its creation, not only by many advances in organisation and method but by practical results in the successful detection and prosecution of crime. The number of arrests by detectives for criminal offences in the Metropolitan Police district rose from 13,128 in 1879 to 15,472 in 1880 and to 17,522 in 1883.

Fenian gunpowder had been largely responsible

\* The Royal Commission of 1928-29 have found that there is no evidence of any practice of initiating offences with a view to inducing or entrapping persons into committing breaches of the law.



for the formation of the new detective force in 1869, and Fenian (or Irish-American) dynamite was to occupy a large part of the energies of the C.I.D. in the eighties. These were years of continued excitement, bordering at times on panic. The real dangers were serious enough, and the C.I.D. had to cope not only with them but with a constant stream of alarmist information. It was in such conditions that the Special Branch, or Special Irish Branch, of the C.I.D. originated under Mr. Monro (who had succeeded Mr. Vincent in 1884). One of the dynamite explosions in 1885 was in Scotland Yard outside the office of this new "dynamite branch," the name by which it was then familiarly known.

The dynamite campaign practically ceased after 1885, but 1887, the Jubilee year, was full of anxieties for the C.I.D. and its Special Branch. Next year, 1888, came the series of fiendish murders in Whitechapel popularly attributed to "Jack the Ripper," a name that first appeared as the signature to a bogus letter which was treated as possibly authentic and given undue publicity by Scotland Yard. Notwithstanding the peculiar character of these murders, both as regards locality and victims, there was a general scare, many believing that Satan, or perhaps Cain, was revisiting the Earth. Feeling ran very high against Scotland Yard and the C.I.D. for their failure to lay hands on the murderer, who, it is now certain, escaped justice by committing suicide at the end of 1888. There was a further alarm in 1889, when another murder of the Jack the Ripper type coincided with the issue of the

Commissioner's Annual Report for 1888, in which Mr. Monro stated that crime was on the increase and that he had not enough men to cope with it.\*

With the advent of Sir Edward Bradford as Commissioner in 1890 the C.I.D., like the rest of the police, settled down to a period of fewer domestic troubles and popular alarms. By signal successes in sensational murder cases such as that of Neil Cream, the poisoner, and Millsom and Fowler, the Muswell Hill murderers, and by steady achievement in the less advertised everyday business of thief-catching, the C.I.D. built up in the nineties a world-wide reputation for efficiency in crime detection.

Before passing to the C.I.D. of to-day, this brief retrospect may be concluded with a reference to the almost complete disappearance of the old prejudice against the detective. The view that the employment of police in plain clothes should be restricted as much as possible is still strongly held. It has found recent expression both in the Report of the MacMillan Committee (November, 1928) on the duties of the police in regard to "street offences," and also in the Report (March, 1929) of the Lee Commission on police powers and procedure. Both disapprove of plain clothes men being used to detect "street offences," or acts of indecency in the parks. The latter deprecate the use by the C.I.D. of "the method of bluff," and condemn the practice (followed in the Gutteridge case—see Appendix I) of arrest on a minor charge pending inquiries into a major crime, because it "contains elements of subterfuge."

\* As to this see page 49.

But the idea that the plain clothes men in general are spies or *agents provocateurs* is extinct. The public are more apt to be critical of the obviousness of a plain-clothes policeman, and great play is made with this in books and on the stage. It is a disappointment to some persons who call in the C.I.D. to find a detective producing a visiting card indicating what he is, instead of pretending to be a piano tuner, or a sweep, or a long lost cousin.

This change in public opinion has been helped by the vogue of the detective story, which has cast a halo of romance and adventure round an occupation which used to be regarded, at its best, as that of a Paul Pry. Novelists and the public may sometimes under-rate the intelligence and abilities of Scotland Yard, and the police officer may serve as a foil to the brilliance of a Sherlock Holmes, but no one will deny that to belong to the detective police requires high qualities of courage and character, and, although it may have to be carried on in close and constant contact with the sordid underworld of crime, is an honourable occupation deserving of and dependent upon the fullest measure of public support.

## Chapter VIII

### THE C.I.D.

#### (1) *The organisation of the C.I.D.*

THE detective or plain-clothes branch of the Metropolitan Police, which has been known as the Criminal Investigation Department (the C.I.D.), since 1878, consists of, (*a*) the detective staff at headquarters, who are the "Scotland Yard" of popular fame and detective fiction; (*b*) the local detectives, who form part of the police establishment of each of the twenty-three divisions; and (*c*) the Special Branch, which is an offshoot of the C.I.D., engaged on duties that relate to public safety, special protection, etc. The Special Branch is separately dealt with at the end of this chapter. The total detective force (*a*), (*b*) and (*c*) is now (1929) nearly one thousand strong, of whom about three hundred are employed at, or are attached to headquarters.

Assistant Commissioner "C" is in charge of the whole department, and there is a Deputy Assistant Commissioner for criminal investigation and another for the Special Branch. The other gradations of rank are the same as in the uniformed police—chief constable, superintendent, chief inspector, inspector, sergeant and constable, a detective con-

stable being usually known as "Detective So-and-So," or as "a plain clothes patrol." All cases or matters of importance which fall to be dealt with by the C.I.D. at Scotland Yard or in the divisions, come under the general purview of the Deputy-Assistant Commissioner, and, where necessary, are submitted to the Assistant Commissioner and the Commissioner. The Chief Constable of the C.I.D. acts in a directing and advisory capacity as regards the actual conduct of inquiries, and he is assisted by five superintendents, one of whom is in charge of the Central Office while each of the other four supervises the local work in one of the four districts in which the divisions are grouped. Below the superintendents are eight chief inspectors, and the proportions of the lower ranks are approximately 100 inspectors, 250 sergeants and 550 detectives.

The detective staff at Scotland Yard are the descendants of the small plain-clothes branch formed in 1842. The majority of them are in the Central Office ("Central"); the remainder are in the Criminal Record Office ("C.R.O."), which may be taken to include the Finger Print Bureau. The Criminal Records staff are the archivists of crime, and their work is the subject of the next chapter.

The detective officers of "Central" deal with cases of an imperial or national character, and with those in which inquiries have to be pursued in several districts, or which for other reasons can best be handled by the central organisation, including cases referred to Scotland Yard by provincial forces. A large proportion of the Metropolitan cases in

which the Director of Public Prosecutions\* is concerned thus come to them, together with extradition cases, cases under the Fugitive Offenders Act, international crime, white slave traffic, and inquiries on behalf of Government departments.

The division into a Central Office at Scotland Yard and local detective staffs in the different parts of the police district is the only form of sectional organisation (apart from the Criminal Record Office and the Special Branch), adopted in the C.I.D. There are no separate sections or "squads," each concentrating on certain kinds of crime, as in continental police forces, where the policy of specialisation in detective work is favoured to a degree altogether unknown in this country. As has been pointed out by Mr. Fosdick in his book "European Police Systems," specialisation is a necessary consequence of centralisation; if all the detective work is carried on from headquarters, as abroad, the division of labour naturally tends to be based on varieties of crime. In the Berlin detective organisation, which affords, or used to afford, the extreme example of the lengths to which specialisation may be carried, swindlers were distributed between four or five sections, thefts from flats would be handled by different officers according to whether the flat was tenanted or untenanted, and the stealing of meat from markets would be the province of a particular squad. In the Metropolitan police the whole C.I.D. is assigned to crime in general, and the

\* The Director of Public Prosecutions in England and Wales is not, like the Public Prosecutor of other countries, concerned with investigations into crime; his is an independent department charged with the institution and conduct of prosecutions in certain cases.

bulk of the work is distributed on the basis of locality. At the same time there is specialisation, in the sense that officers who have had experience or achieved success with regard to a particular class of case continue, so far as possible, to be regularly employed on similar cases and thus acquire a specially expert knowledge of one or more branches of crime and kinds of criminals. This degree of specialisation is almost inevitable, but it does not extend to earmarking particular varieties of crime for particular officers or sections, and any such arrangement is open to the objection that it is liable to involve a good deal of standing by, because of the fluctuations in the different kinds of crime. The term "squad" has recently come into use at Scotland Yard in connection with the mobile brigade known as "the Flying Squad," but this squad constitutes no exception to the general rule, as it is employed for miscellaneous purposes.

The specialists of the C.I.D. are mostly to be found in the Central Office, whose senior officers, the chief inspectors and inspectors, are nearly all men of over twenty years' service that have made themselves experts in the sense indicated. The chief inspectors are the men on whose achievements the popular reputation of Scotland Yard largely rests, and one or more of them will generally be in charge of a murder case, or other specially difficult investigation. They are sent down to take charge of investigations in the provinces as, for example, during 1927, 1928 and 1929 in the cases of Gutteridge (Essex), Pace (Gloucestershire), Maynard (Cornwall), Messiter

(Southampton) and "Madame X" (Swansea). It must not, however, be supposed that Scotland Yard has a roving commission which enables its detectives to go here, there and everywhere; they can take up a provincial case only if asked to do so by the local Chief Constable. Any officer lent in response to such a request is, for the time being, attached to the local force and keeps the Chief Constable informed of all he does, but he remains under the direct control of the Commissioner. The cases in which Scotland Yard's assistance is invoked by the provincial police are usually murders, and have not recently averaged more than four or five a year; it is only in detective stories that an officer from "the Yard" will be found speeding to the scene of a country burglary, or clearing up a country house scandal. Those police forces which have no detective branches of their own, or only small ones, are encouraged by the Home Office to call in the C.I.D. in difficult cases, not because Scotland Yard has any monopoly of detective brains but to obtain the benefit of its wider experience and greater resources, which naturally far exceed those of any other detective establishment in Great Britain. It is clearly desirable that detectives of the greatest skill and experience should be available to conduct a criminal investigation in any part of the country.

The "Flying Squad," of which a great deal has been recently heard in the popular Press, is not a new invention, but a post-War development of the old idea of having a mobile brigade of detectives for special duty, in connection with outbreaks of crime



in any part of London, or for operations all over the district. Since the War the Squad, as it has been christened, has increased in numbers and activities, and has been equipped with motor-cars of many types which bear no outward sign of their connection with the police and carry concealed wireless. It is thus a match for criminals who themselves use motor-cars—as do most dangerous and up-to-date criminals, stealing them if necessary—or who have such a network of watchers that, without an organisation like the Flying Squad, it would be difficult to surprise them. The Squad is attached to the Central Office and is controlled by one of the chief inspectors: it collaborates with the divisional detectives in dealing with gangs of motor-car thieves, housebreakers, burglars, pickpockets, etc., and forms one of the many links between the central and local organisations of the C.I.D. The Squad keeps special observation on the movements of known and habitual criminals, (pickpockets, etc.), thus curtailing the intervals of liberty during which they prey upon the public. The use of wireless (the technical side of which is managed by the Receiver's engineering staff), keeps the various units of the Squad in constant touch with Scotland Yard, and enables them to receive or transmit information and to be sent in any direction, or to be mobilised as a single force at a few minutes' notice. The captures of the Squad are numerous, and the moral effect on the criminal classes of its secrecy, speed and ubiquity is very great. It should be added that the Squad does not (like the *brigade mobile* of the French detective

police) fly all over the country; its activities are confined to London.

The Central Office and the divisional detectives are in constant and close relations with each other in many ways, so that the advantages of centralisation are combined with those of local knowledge and local co-operation with the uniformed police. There are periodical conferences at Scotland Yard, which enable the divisional staffs to visit the branches at headquarters and see their chiefs, the Assistant and Deputy Assistant Commissioner, and the Chief Constable. The divisional detective work, as a whole, is under the supervision of the Chief Constable of the C.I.D. and the four area superintendents, who were created after the War and were dubbed by journalists "the Big Four," a name current at the time for the four leading statesmen at the Peace Conference. Their areas are the same as the districts of the four district Chief Constables.

The local organisation of the C.I.D. dates from 1869. Its general plan is that detectives are attached to all important stations and have separate offices there. The number of detectives assigned to each division and station varies according to the need for their services. They are employed in investigating all local crime that may require the services of the C.I.D., and in keeping observation to prevent and detect crime. They form part of the divisional organisation and, for general disciplinary purposes, come under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of the division; their reports pass through him, so that he may be kept informed of all the criminal work, but in the actual conduct of their cases they

are controlled and directed by the superior officers of the C.I.D. In each division there is a divisional detective inspector, known as "the D.D.I.," who has an office at the head station of the division; his is the general responsibility for all inquiries and other detective work in his division. He keeps the divisional C.I.D. records and registers, which include the registers of convicts on licence reporting in the division, special registers of known or suspected receivers of stolen property (who are, to a large extent, the foci of local crime), and portrait albums of local criminals. The D.D.I. has two detective inspectors to assist him in the larger or busier divisions and one in the others, with a varying number of detective sergeants and detectives or patrols.

As indicated in the previous chapter, both central and local detectives are recruited from the ranks of the uniformed constables, and every candidate for the detective branch must have done at least one year's and not more than seven years' duty in uniform. Subject to this condition, any constable may apply to join the C.I.D. If he is considered *prima facie* suitable for detective work by his superintendent and the D.D.I., the Chief Constable of the C.I.D. is asked to approve of his being given a trial in plain clothes, and, if he acquits himself satisfactorily, he will be recommended to the Deputy Assistant Commissioner for employment as a plain-clothes patrol, subject to passing a special educational examination. This entrance examination restricts admission to the C.I.D. to the better educated constables, but it must not, of course, be

inferred that all the brains of the force are in the C.I.D., more especially as the C.I.D. represents less than a twentieth of the total strength.

When first appointed, a plain-clothes patrol is on probation, and, concurrently with actual employment on detective duties in a division, he undergoes instruction at Scotland Yard in the general principles and practice of criminal investigation and in criminal law. He cannot be permanently appointed as a detective at the end of his probation, unless he passes an examination in these matters and has shown sufficient practical ability. There is a second and more difficult examination for promotion to detective sergeant, which is in the nature of a final test of a man's intelligence and aptitude for the special duties of the C.I.D. A detective who cannot pass this examination has, as a general rule, to return to other duties. This is not in any sense a degradation but only a decision that he is better suited for other work. Men incapable of passing examinations may be born "thiefcatchers," and such men would be either retained as permanent patrols or employed from time to time in plain clothes, to reinforce the regular C.I.D. officers, or to initiate the fledgeling detective in the elements of thiefcatching. Subject to the two qualifying examinations, promotion in the C.I.D., as in other branches, is by selection, on the basis of ability, merit and length of service, and the competition for the higher posts is severe.

Since 1919 the rates of pay for the various ranks of the C.I.D. have been the same as for the corresponding ranks of the uniformed police, but a C.I.D.

officer receives, in addition to his pay, a plain-clothes allowance and a detective allowance. The former, which is to compensate him for having to provide his own clothes, varies from five shillings a week, for a sergeant or constable, to £18 a year for a superintendent. The latter is partly to cover out-of-pocket expenses and varies from five shillings a week for a constable to fifteen shillings a week for a superintendent.

A C.I.D. officer necessarily works long and irregular hours ; his inquiries must usually be prosecuted with as little intermission as possible. To "strike while the iron's hot" is of the greatest importance in criminal investigation, for valuable information may be irretrievably lost if a detective fails to seize at once any opportunity of obtaining it. C.I.D. officers may be on duty making inquiries or keeping observation in a case for twenty-four hours or longer at a stretch, and, when it comes to taking a statement from a prisoner, it is often the captor and not the captive who has the right to be in a state of exhaustion before the task is finished.

## (2) *The Work of the C.I.D.*

The name Criminal Investigation Department might be thought to explain sufficiently the general nature of detective work, but it has to be pointed out that the C.I.D. does not investigate all and every crime, nor does it confine its activities to investigation, for prevention is as much the aim of the detective, as of the uniformed policeman. Crime, for C.I.D. purposes, means the more serious offences against person or property ; minor breaches of

the peace, contraventions of laws or regulations for the good government of the community (of which motor-car offences are nowadays the commonest example), are all technically "crimes," being subject to penalties enforceable in criminal courts, but they do not come within the province of the C.I.D.

Speaking generally, a C.I.D. case is one in which the offence is serious enough to be indictable, i.e. one for which a person may be committed for trial. All serious crimes are included in the list of indictable offences, and very few that are not serious, in the sense of being really criminal. The number of indictable offences reported to the Metropolitan police have averaged between 15,000 and 16,000 a year since the war, and nearly all would be investigated by the C.I.D. But these figures do not give a complete idea of the volume, or importance of C.I.D. work. Thousands of cases are referred to the C.I.D. for inquiry which do not come before a Court, or even get to the stage of being classified as a reported crime, but the work done on them is none the less valuable on that account; it is largely of a preventive character, and it is constantly on the increase, as a necessary consequence of the expansion of London and its population.

Crime, in the ordinary and C.I.D. sense, consists mostly of offences against property, that is to say, of theft, fraud or other forms of dishonesty. The criminal statistics of England and Wales for the last seventy years or so show that offences against property account for about 90 per cent. of the

indictable offences known to the police. Crimes of violence, in particular homicides, have steadily declined. In London, with a population approaching eight millions, there were, in 1926, only sixteen murders,\* the work of fourteen persons, of whom eight committed suicide, and in only one case (the Bayswater shop murder) was the murderer undiscovered. In 1927 there were twenty-seven murder cases, all of which were solved; they were the work of twenty-three persons, of whom ten committed suicide, one died in an asylum, and three were declared insane. In 1928 there were twenty-one murders, two of which were by the same hand: seven of the murderers committed suicide and eleven were arrested: the three for which no arrest was made were abortion cases. These figures explain why Scotland Yard has no "homicide bureau." Other crimes of violence occupy almost as low a place in the statistical record. Sensational "hold-ups" in post offices or banks and frequent references in the Press to "motor bandits" may have given the impression of a wave of crimes of violence since the War, attributable to a large part of the population having been familiarised with the use of firearms, but the prominence given to such occurrences, because of their "sensational" character, is misleading and contrasts with their actual rarity. Cases of robbery or attempted robbery with violence in the Metropolitan police district have averaged about thirty a year since the War. Statistics

\* The figures given do not include infanticide, the killing of a newly born child by its mother before she has fully recovered from the effects of childbirth.

indicate a recent increase in crime in England and Wales, the indictable offences known to the police in 1926 being 17 per cent. more than in 1925 and 25 per cent. more than the annual average of 1920-1924, but this is probably due to temporary causes, and the figures for 1927 are below those for 1926.

Of the 15,000 or 16,000 indictable offences committed annually in the Metropolitan police district of late, petty thefts represent about one-third; other forms of larceny, embezzlement, obtaining goods by false pretences, etc., another third, and the bulk of the remainder are house-breaking and shopbreaking offences. Burglary, it should be noted, is an uncommon offence; there have recently been only two or three hundred cases a year in the Metropolitan police district and about four times that number in the whole of England and Wales; but it is not much consolation to the thousands who have their houses entered by thieves between the hours of 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. to know that the crime is housebreaking and not burglary.

Housebreaking and shopbreaking are the crimes which, perhaps, give most trouble to the police and least to the criminal. The incidence of this class of offence varies very much as between winter and summer; it is at its height in December and January and gradually declines to very small proportions in June and July, and then rises again steadily as the days shorten. Not only does darkness facilitate the criminal's operations but he is more pushed for his livelihood in winter than in summer. But this seasonal tendency has local



variations, dependent, for example, upon the extent to which people leave their houses unoccupied and unattended to during the holiday months. Other crimes do not exhibit such marked seasonal variation, but there is a general tendency for crimes against property to be most numerous in autumn and winter, and crimes against the person in spring and summer.

This rough analysis of crime gives some idea of the general run of C.I.D. work and suggests that, as compared with the tasks of Sherlock Holmes, or Dr. Thorndyke, it is not exciting. The detective side of police work, in an English force at all events, is, it must be admitted, a somewhat matter-of-fact occupation, in which hard work and a knowledge of the criminal classes are essential. Crime in real life is largely the work of professional criminals of poor intellectual capacity, no social accomplishments or charms, and little imagination, though they may have a great deal of low cunning. To cope with them successfully, powers of abstract reasoning and scientific knowledge or apparatus serve less than the more commonplace resources which may be summed up in the word "information," including under that term not merely the assistance derived from informants but close and constant personal observation of criminals, their ways, haunts and associates, backed by an efficient system to ensure the identification of old offenders. It may need a "master brain" to defeat the machinations of "master criminals," but, as someone has said, it requires an ordinary policeman to deal with ordinary crooks, and it is from them that society has most need to be protected.

Scotland Yard, however, is far from contemning or disregarding scientific aids in the detection of crime. Under Sir Edward Henry it gave the world a lead in adopting finger prints as the basis of criminal identification, and it has devised an efficient system whereby finger prints can be telegraphed or wirelessly, so that it is possible for a man arrested in London, whose finger prints are not recorded here, to be identified in the course of a few hours as a criminal who is on the books of some police force at the other side of the globe. In the development and use of wireless for C.I.D. purposes generally, Scotland Yard has been ahead of police in other countries and has seen its ideas and appliances adopted by other services. But, on the whole, Scotland Yard and the Home Office have followed the policy of leaving science to the scientists and calling them in when need arises. This may be partly due to what has been described as the "conservatism" of Scotland Yard, but it is also accounted for by other governing facts. The stringent financial control which has always characterised Metropolitan police administration has tended to rule out scientific appliances as over-expensive luxuries. Apart from this, there are few cases which afford scope for an expert acquaintance with physiology, analytical chemistry or toxicology, or for such recondite knowledge as can readily distinguish the 114 varieties of tobacco ash, or different kinds of dust or hair. Even in such cases, English criminal procedure and rules of evidence are not favourable to the use of some of the scientific proofs which continental experts can

produce, and English courts and juries are distrustful of them.

Scotland Yard has a very well-equipped photographic department; the training given to its detectives covers all necessary knowledge in regard to bloodstains, finger prints and footprints; and scientific experts are often called in, but it has no laboratories of its own and no university-trained scientists are attached to its staff. Scotland Yard would be proud to have produced such a book as Dr. Gross' "System der Kriminalistik," the leading work on the detection of crime, and it gratefully avails itself of such achievements, but the general plan of its organisation, and indeed of the English police system, as a whole, has not hitherto allowed for the inclusion of criminologists.

If science is of great and increasing importance in the investigation of crime, "information" (in the sense already explained), will continue to be the predominating factor in the great majority of cases. And next to information comes the work of those two officers who have been recognised as indispensable to every detective branch, Inspector Luck and Sergeant Chance. This is merely the C.I.D. version of Frederick the Great's dictum that "the older one gets the more convinced one becomes that His Majesty King Chance does three-quarters of the business of this miserable universe."

*The Royal Commission on Police Powers and Procedure*  
(1928-29)

The powers and duties of the police in the investigation of crimes and other offences, and their practice in interrogating or taking statements

from persons interviewed in the course of such investigation, have recently been the subject of inquiry by the Royal Commission which was appointed in August, 1928 (under the chairmanship of Lord Lee of Fareham), as a result of the interrogation at Scotland Yard in May, 1928, of a Miss Savidge, whose case was taken up in the House of Commons. This case, which arose out of a Hyde Park charge, was of no great public importance in itself, and was in no sense a typical C.I.D. inquiry. It was a special interrogation undertaken in peculiar circumstances, on behalf of the Director of Public Prosecutions. The majority of the Committee (a judge and two members of Parliament) appointed to inquire into the matter exonerated the police officers concerned of improper conduct. The case, however, threw up issues of much moment to the public as well as the police, and their nature and significance may be briefly explained.

In many countries as, for example, Scotland and France, the law provides that a person who is under suspicion of having committed or having been concerned in a crime, or who may be thought to have some relevant information, shall be brought as soon as may be before a magistrate to be interrogated by him, and refusal to answer the magistrate's questions is punishable. In England the questioning of suspects or of other persons in the course of investigations into crime has always been left to the police\*. The police, however, have no power to

\* The questioning of suspects, etc., used to be carried out by Bow Street and other magistrates before 1829, but this was in the rôle of police officers which they combined with that of magistrates.

compel people to answer questions, and are liable to actions for wrongful arrest or false imprisonment if they detain anyone improperly.

The practice of the police in regard to interrogations and the taking of statements from accused persons, suspects, or possible witnesses, and their other methods, powers and duties in the matter of criminal investigation, have not hitherto been the subject of any public inquiry by a Commission or Committee : this is in itself a tribute to the manner in which the C.I.D. have carried out their work in the fifty years that have elapsed since their establishment. Another remarkable testimony to the absence of oppressive methods is the fact that it is difficult, if not impossible, to find a case in which a Court has refused to admit in evidence a statement obtained by the police, on the ground that it had been obtained by improper methods. This is, in part, due to the fact that difficult and delicate investigations are almost invariably handled by specially selected officers of long experience.

Police methods in the investigation of crimes and offences have now, however, in the words of the Chairman of the Royal Commission, been brought before "a British jury of men and women of the world." Their verdict is, on the whole, a very favourable one, and, as regards their proposals for alterations in procedure, it can safely be said that no one is more anxious than the detective that his methods shall accord with public opinion. Without the goodwill of the public, criminal investigation, difficult as it is, would be ten times more difficult still.

The general regulations of the Metropolitan police, which on this point faithfully represent the

spirit in which criminal investigation is carried out in this country, enjoin on all officers that their duty in making inquiries is to elicit the facts impartially in the interests of justice, and that they must in no sense act as prosecutors, but must be as zealous in finding out what tells in a person's favour as in discovering evidence against him. No one who has any knowledge of English criminal courts or of the relations between the police and the criminal classes can fail to be impressed with the sincere desire of the police to bring out whatever is known in favour of a prisoner.

It is difficult to elicit facts, either for or against a person, without questioning him, and it is often next to impossible to ascertain what a person really knows, or means to say, without a degree of persistence and repetition in questioning which can hardly avoid being compared to a cross-examination and runs the risk of being denounced as "third degree."\*

The limits within which the police may question prisoners, suspects and others, have been deliberated upon by the Royal Commission and may, as a result of their recommendations, be more precisely defined and narrowly restricted. This may be in accordance with the tradition in England that crime

\* Several explanations as to the derivation and meaning of the phrase "third degree" are current. One is that it refers to the third degree in mediæval tortures. In transatlantic usage "third degree" means the private and pressing interrogation of a prisoner, including sometimes the employment of physical means to make him confess. In this country the term seems merely to mean prolonged questioning, in order to arrive at the truth. In this sense Socrates was the first and most notorious practitioner of "third degree." The Royal Commission have reported that third degree (in the transatlantic sense) does not exist in this country and would not be tolerated by the police themselves.

had better go undetected than that the criminal should not have fair play, or be deprived of any of the avenues of escape which the law allows him. But at the same time the public expects crime to be detected, and success in this task is dependent mainly upon information, which often means obtaining the confidence of criminals or suspects. If attempts to get information are always to be prefaced by telling the person to think twice before giving it, the flow may be dried up in a way that would benefit no one but the criminal.

Lord Brampton's maxim, "Keep your eyes and your ears open and your mouth shut," has been spoken of as a golden rule for the police, but it is also a golden rule for a criminal. If "Questioning by the Police not allowed" is to become a maxim of criminal investigation by the police, many will think that the sooner it is transferred to those who can ask questions the better.

### (3) *The Special Branch*

The Special Branch of the C.I.D. may be described as the English substitute for a political police, but it is necessary at once to apologise for such a description. Politics and police are twin brothers etymologically, but the English aim has always been to keep them from actual association. The perversion of the French police system to purposes of political espionage was one of the factors which delayed police reform in England, and the fear that an organised body of police under government control would be similarly used in this country accounted for much of the suspicion with which the Metropolitan police were at first viewed. A political

police necessarily means a secret police, and a secret police is one of the things that the British people are determined not to have.

The Special Branch originated, as already explained, during the Irish-American dynamite campaign of 1883-1885, and was at first known as "the Special Irish Branch." When the dynamite outrages began in London, members of the Royal Irish Constabulary were thought to be more competent for the protection of public buildings and the persons of Cabinet ministers than London's own police, and in their green uniforms and rifles they were to be seen for a time on sentry-go in the Whitehall neighbourhood. Their importation was naturally resented by the Metropolitan police, and pointed to the necessity of having at Scotland Yard a staff specially assigned to Irish or Irish-American crime. Selected officers of the C.I.D. were, therefore, detached for the work of investigating the dynamite plots, making inquiries for the Irish Government, keeping observation on Irish-American suspects and guarding Ministers of the Crown and public buildings. They were assisted by some of the divisional detectives and by suitable men—mostly Irish—from the uniformed ranks. Amongst them was Sergeant Quinn, who was afterwards head of the branch and became Sir Patrick Quinn, the first superintendent of police to receive (in 1919) the honour of a knighthood. This special staff was not recognised as a separate branch and placed on a permanent footing until the end of 1886, when the necessity for it was reinforced by the anxiety to guard against any risk of outrage in connection with



Queen Victoria's Jubilee. There was a plot to have a dynamite explosion in the Abbey during the Jubilee ceremony, and other disquieting incidents occurred, but the actual plots were greatly outnumbered by the imaginary ones, and, to reassure the public, it was considered essential to have a specially experienced staff to investigate them. During the dynamite period, C.I.D. officers were stationed at certain home and foreign ports where observation could best be kept on the movements of foreign conspirators with designs on this country. Their services were found so useful for various purposes that they have been retained at some of them ever since, as part of the Special Branch organisation.

Once the Special Branch had been established, there was no lack of work for it. Before the Irish troubles were over, anarchists were claiming a large share of its attention. In the early 'nineties, anarchists' bombs caused some excitement and inspired the jingle:

"It's a B.O.M.B. bomb!

It's a B.O.M.B. bomb!

They said it's very hard on Scotland Yard,

It's a B.O.M.B. bomb!"

In more recent times other Irish extremists, Indian agitators, suffragettes, communists and Russian propagandists have kept the Special Branch busy. During the Great War it co-operated with the naval and military authorities in the work of counter-espionage, and many and dramatic were the interrogations of suspected spies that took place in the Assistant Commissioner's room at Scotland Yard. This and other war work assumed such proportions

that the Branch was for a time detached from the C.I.D. and placed under an Assistant Commissioner with the title "Director of Intelligence," an arrangement which came to an end in 1922.

The normal work of the Special Branch has to do with the protection of Royalty, Ministers of the Crown or ex-Ministers, distinguished foreign visitors and other public personages who may be exposed to risk from extremists or lunatics, and it plays an important part in the control of aliens. The registration of aliens is undertaken by the uniformed police and comes under another department of Scotland Yard, but the Special Branch co-operates with the Home Office in regard to the admission of aliens to this country, supervises those whose activities are unwelcome and carries out the necessary inquiries as to the eligibility of an alien for naturalisation.

The Branch is separately recruited from the uniformed force, although in much the same way as the rest of the C.I.D. Its work attracts rather a different type of man, and information plays an even more important part than in criminal investigation. One of the qualifications for admission to the Branch is a knowledge of languages. As the department responsible for police measures required in the interests of national safety, the Special Branch takes Great Britain for its province, but its officers are not stationed outside of the Metropolitan police district, except at the few ports where they work with the Home Office immigration staff; elsewhere any necessary inquiries are made through the local Chief Constable.

## Chapter IX

### THE CRIMINAL RECORD OFFICE

*Criminal Records—Finger Prints—The Crime Index  
—Police Publications—Convict Supervision*

THE Criminal Record Office, known for short as "C.R.O.," is a national registry of crimes and a "Who's Who" of their perpetrators, a storehouse of criminals' shadows, a means of enabling new crimes to be traced to old criminals and old criminals to be recognised for what they are. "No known criminal," said the Paris Prefect of Police recently, "with a dossier at the *Sûreté* can hope to continue for very long without falling foul of the law," and the same may be said of a criminal with a file in C.R.O. In the matter of the punishment of criminals, C.R.O. is the recording angel whose testimony, of the good as well as the bad in a criminal, is received by the Judge after conviction and before sentence.

Most countries have some centralised system or systems of criminal records. In Great Britain a thoroughly comprehensive and effective system dates from the establishment of the Central Finger Print Bureau at Scotland Yard under Sir Edward Henry in 1901. The main purpose of criminal records is to identify old offenders, that is to say, to secure that, if Bill Sykes commits a fresh crime, or turns up in a

new place as John Jones, he shall be recognised or traced as Bill Sykes. This problem is distinct from that of verifying the identity of an accused person in police custody, which is usually a question of recognition by persons competent to identify him—by means of an “identification parade” or otherwise.

Originally the identification of old offenders also depended almost entirely on actual personal recognition or recollection of them by police officers or other persons. This could be relied upon only so long as criminals stayed where they were well known and could with difficulty conceal themselves or disguise their identity. In the eighteenth century, when criminals not only became a well organised class in the community but began to enjoy increased facilities for movement, the need was felt for some system of recording and circulating information with regard to them. The first in this country to take practical steps in the matter was Sir John Fielding, who established at Bow Street, about 1755, a central register of burglars, house-breakers, receivers, etc., and of lost or stolen property. Little more was done to develop the idea of a national, or even a London registry, until 1869, when, concurrently with the establishment of a detective force in the Metropolitan police, the first Habitual Criminals Act was passed and there was started at Scotland Yard an habitual criminals\*

\* The term “habitual criminal” now has a special meaning under the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1908, which instituted the form of prolonged imprisonment known as preventive detention for habitual criminals in the sense of hardened offenders who have been convicted at least three times of serious crime and persist in criminal or dishonest courses. The contrast between

register. This, however, was designed at first on far too comprehensive a scale to be of any use. It embraced practically everyone sent to prison, a much more extensive category in 1869 than it is now. A fresh start was made in 1877, when the register was transferred to the Prisons Department at the Home Office and confined to convicts released on licence and criminals sentenced to police supervision or subject to the special provisions of the Prevention of Crimes Act, 1871. The register consisted of particulars of convictions, personal descriptions (including body marks) and photographs, but even in its improved form it was never of much practical value, for various reasons of which the chief were that the information collected was circulated to the police only at long intervals and there was no satisfactory system of classification.

In 1880 a Convict Supervision Office was formed, as a branch of the C.I.D., for the assistance and supervision of convicts on licence and police supervisees, and in connection therewith Scotland Yard began to develop a records system of its own, with photograph albums and registers in which were recorded biographical details, peculiarities of method, physical marks, etc. The Home Office habitual criminals register was eventually amalgamated with these records in 1896; book registers were then replaced by card-indexes and steps were

this definition and the 1869 idea that anyone who went to prison might as well be included in the category of habitual criminals is some measure of the progress made in dealing with offenders. In 1927 only 42 persons were found to be habitual criminals and sentenced to preventive detention in England and Wales.

taken to give the local police notice of the impending release from prison of criminals who required watching, by the issue of a Weekly Convict List giving advance information of such cases.

In the meantime efforts were being made to find a more efficient system of identifying criminals. The work of searching through registers and albums of photographs, on the chance of picking out the right man, was a slow and uncertain process, and the results were hardly proportionate to the labour involved. Photographs are notoriously unreliable and distinctive marks are only of limited use, as many persons have no bodily marks that are really distinctive or sufficiently definite and permanent. Mistakes in identification were liable to occur, although they were in fact rare. The great defect was that a very large number of old offenders escaped identification.

An inquiry by a Committee appointed by Mr. Asquith during his Home Secretaryship led to Scotland Yard adopting in 1894 the Bertillon anthropometric system, which was invented about 1880 by Dr. Bertillon, head of the Paris Criminal Record Office from 1887 to 1913. Under this system certain measurements are taken of bony structures in the body, such as the length of the head, left middle finger, forearm and foot, which vary greatly in different persons and do not alter after adolescence. The system was worked by Scotland Yard for about six years, as an adjunct to the older methods, but the number of identifications effected by its means was comparatively small and it never met with the degree of success which characterised it in France,

where it is still in use in conjunction with finger prints. The work of taking the measurements is a complicated and difficult business, as compared with finger prints, and accurate results depend upon the skill of the measurer. There are other weaknesses in the system, and it is one which is of course applicable only after a criminal has been caught, and cannot be used like finger prints as a means of determining the unknown author of a crime.

The finger print system was meanwhile being experimented with and was destined quickly to supersede the anthropometric method in this and most other countries. Sir Francis Galton, founder of the science of eugenics, who had studied finger prints mainly from the points of view of heredity and anthropology, gave evidence as to their utility for purposes of criminal identification before the Home Office Committee of 1894, and they were brought into tentative use at Scotland Yard from 1895 onwards. The difficulty at the time was the absence of any suitable and simple method of primary classification, but the solution of this difficulty was worked out in the East, whence the idea of using finger prints to establish personal identity had been derived. A satisfactory system of classification was devised in India in 1898 by Sir Edward Henry, who was then Mr. Henry, Inspector-General of Police in Bengal, and, after another inquiry by a Home Office Committee in 1900, it was adopted in this country in 1901, and its successful working assured by Mr. Henry's appointment in the same year as Assistant Commissioner

in charge of the C.I.D., and as Commissioner of Police in 1903.

A central Finger Print Bureau for Great Britain, available for all police forces, was established at Scotland Yard, and the number of cases in which old criminals were identified at once went up by leaps and bounds. In the first year the number was nearly four times as many as had been previously achieved under the anthropometric system, and by the end of 1928 over 286,000 identifications had been effected through the Finger Print Bureau. Not only is identification by means of finger prints sure: it is also speedy. If a criminal is arrested in London at night, his finger prints and criminal history are often available for the magistrate next morning, and Scotland Yard undertakes to give a definite answer to a finger print inquiry from any part of Great Britain the day it is received.

In the last twenty-five years finger prints have been adopted for the identification of criminals in most civilised lands where any organised police system exists. Abroad they are more widely used than here, being considered in many countries to be a suitable and proper means for establishing identity for civil no less than for criminal purposes, as, for example, in India. In South America finger prints as well as photographs are used on passports. In this country the power to compel a person to have his finger prints taken applies only to persons committed to prison, and if, therefore, the police cannot obtain prints while a prisoner is in their custody, he will be finger-printed in prison, either during a remand in custody or on admission after con-



viction and sentence. In England there is still a somewhat unreasoning objection to any more general use of finger prints or extension of the cases in which prints can be taken. This is mainly due to their criminal associations, but it is to some extent founded on the mistaken idea that an innocent person's prints will be preserved by the police and used against him, whereas, in fact, the one anxiety of Scotland Yard is how to keep down the number of prints in their collection.

The finger prints filed in the Central Bureau at Scotland Yard are those of all persons who have been convicted and sentenced in Great Britain to imprisonment for serious criminal offences, as specified in the statutory regulations on the subject. A criminal's finger prints form the basis on which is constructed his personal file. After an arrested person has been finger-printed by the police, or in prison on remand, his prints are sent to Scotland Yard for search to be made in the Finger Print Bureau. If they are identical with a set already filed, a point which can be settled in a few minutes, this establishes at once that the person is a registered criminal, full particulars of whom will be in C.R.O. and will be immediately forwarded to the police concerned. If the search fails to show that the person is a registered criminal, the result of the trial will be awaited and, if a conviction ensues and the offence is one of those specified in the finger print regulations, the prints already in the possession of C.R.O., or taken and sent there after the conviction, will be filed and a record sheet with finger prints, photographs and all necessary

particulars will be prepared and registered ; otherwise the prints will be destroyed and the person left with a clean sheet, so far as Scotland Yard is concerned.

The number of sets of finger prints of persons awaiting trial sent to Scotland Yard for search has averaged about 35,000 a year in the last seven years, and in about 45 per cent. of the cases the person has been identified as an old offender. The number of new sets added to the collection and new criminal records registered during the same period has averaged about 20,000 a year.

The nature of finger prints is a matter of general knowledge, but it may be briefly explained here what they are and how they are used for police purposes.

The palm of the hand and the sole of the foot are marked by numerous lines or furrows which, with the ridges in between, known as papillary ridges, show many varieties of pattern, both as regards their general form and the finer details. Sir Francis Galton proved that the furrows and ridges which form the patterns persist unaltered through life, from babyhood to old age, and he also demonstrated that the chances of two persons having identical finger prints were about one in sixty-four thousand millions. The utility and importance of finger prints for establishing personal identity depend on these two facts which are now recognised as indisputable by the Courts all the world over. Sir Edward Henry devised a system under which the patterns could be grouped under four main types (known as loops, arches, whorls and com-

posites), sub-classification being effected by reference to the number of ridges and various finer details in the ridge characteristics which can be expressed by numerical symbols. His system has been generally adopted, although another, the Vucetich or Argentine system, is in use in Italy and South America and a modification of the Henry system, Dr. Roscher's, in Berlin.

All detectives are required to possess some knowledge of the finger print system: they are trained to detect any impressions at the scene of a crime, and, if they find any prints with sufficiently decipherable detail, to take the necessary steps to bring them out, in order that they may be photographed and, if necessary, enlarged so as to be more readily used as evidence. Accidental finger impressions are apt to be blurred, and the police count themselves fortunate when they find at the scene of a crime, or on any article which may have been handled by the criminal, a clear impression of thumb or finger. It would, of course, be a very difficult and lengthy task to search the whole collection at Scotland Yard and establish or disprove the identity of any single finger print with one in the collection; but the value of a finger print clue is not circumscribed in this way because in many cases all that need be done is to compare the finger print at the scene of the crime with a relatively limited number of sets belonging to registered criminals whom other considerations indicate as probable or possible authors of the crime, and, by various means, those who are constantly engaged on finger print work are able in a surprising number of cases to effect identifica-

tion when only a single finger print is available for inspection. In the last few years increasing success has attended the efforts of Scotland Yard in this difficult and exacting work of identifying prints on the hundreds of articles which in the course of a year are sent in from all over the country, varying in size from a whole shop front to a candle. It is an interesting fact, from which an obvious conclusion can be drawn, that there are only three cases on record at Scotland Yard of a criminal being twice identified by finger prints left at the scene of a crime.

The collection of finger prints in the Central Bureau at Scotland Yard is still growing, but it is also being steadily cleared of dead men and such live ones as are considered unlikely to trouble the police again. So far as can be foreseen, it is not likely to exceed a maximum of half a million and may possibly be kept down to nearer 400,000, the limit which commends itself to Scotland Yard. Collections such as those at New York and Pretoria, which are not restricted to persons convicted of serious offences, already far exceed the Scotland Yard numbers and are rapidly becoming larger. For such vast numbers the simplicity of the Henry system of classification has had to be considerably modified, and they cannot be manipulated with the speed and accuracy which characterises the Scotland Yard system.

The chief use of finger print records is to establish the identity of a criminal after he is caught; in searching for the unknown criminal the police usually obtain some sort of description, if he has

been seen, or information such as can be derived from the details of the crime or examination of the surroundings or from third parties.

Identification by description is, as might be expected, very frequent, and the carefully classified portrait albums (now containing over 200,000 photographs of criminals), which have been one of the resources of Scotland Yard almost since the invention of photography, are still of great use, but, apart from the unreliability of photographs, an old offender may have escaped inclusion in this "rogues' gallery" because he has not on his previous visits to prison come before the camera. Prisoners are photographed in prison as a matter of routine, only if they have been sentenced to penal servitude or police supervision; in other cases the police, if they want photographs, have to make special application to the prison governor. Similarly, the classification of criminals by descriptive marks (scars, deformities, tattoo marks, etc.), one of the oldest of all methods, has not lost its importance and must always form part of any comprehensive system of records, but we have travelled far from the days when the main differentiation was between those who were pock-marked and those who were not.

A new and very effective way of identifying criminals has recently been added to the resources of the detective—the system of classification by method, technically known as the M.O. (*modus operandi*) system, which at Scotland Yard passes under the name of the Crime Index.

The *Crime Index* is a method of identifying criminals based upon their tendency to specialise.

This characteristic of the criminal has long been known and remarked upon, but it is only within recent years that stress has been laid on the importance of the method or *modus operandi* of a crime as the most useful basis of criminal classification, particularly as regards such offences as larceny, housebreaking or shopbreaking and fraud, which bulk largest in the everyday work of the detective police. In these walks of crime the criminal's habit of repeating the same offence in the same way, or with the same indications of his habits or predilections, often enables him to be ticketed in the Crime Index by idiosyncrasies which are either peculiar to himself or are limited to a few specialists in the same line. Confidence tricksters are perhaps the best known example of old hands playing the same game in the same way over and over again.

The Crime Index consists of a main index and a number of subsidiary indices of special classification. The main index has been built up by selecting from the records of C.R.O. the cases of the more important criminals, especially those whose methods are best adapted for classification. The twenty thousand or so new files made in the Criminal Record Office every year are examined, and a large proportion of the cases are classified for the Crime Index. The names, crimes, methods and descriptions of the criminals are entered upon cards arranged under hundreds of classified heads and subheads. Fraud, for example, the most difficult of detection among serious crimes, and one in which the Crime Index gives the best results, is indexed according to the business or agency by

which the fraud is effected, the character assumed, the class of persons defrauded, etc. etc., and each of these classifications has a large number of subdivisions, more than seventy, for instance, under the head of "character assumed." Other classes of criminal cannot be so minutely subdivided, but even burglars can be distinguished by their method of entry, the food and drink they take, how they negotiate the dog, etc. The police are specially trained when investigating a crime to look for those points which will be of assistance in tracing the offender in the Crime Index.

The work of C.R.O. is, as already mentioned, of a national character, and its records are available for, and are constantly used by provincial police and in international and overseas cases. Particulars relating to about half a million criminals are included in its files, but the various systems of classification greatly simplify the task of searching for a particular individual. The identity of an arrested criminal can quickly be determined, and that of the unknown author of a crime can often be arrived at, by a process of elimination from a short list of those whose recorded methods or physical characteristics indicate them as likely to have committed it.

For the northern half of England there is at Wakefield, the headquarters of the West Riding of Yorkshire Constabulary, a secondary clearing house of crime with its own Crime Index and its own publications. This was the creation of Sir L. W. Atcherley, now one of H.M. Inspectors of Constabulary, when he was Chief Constable of the West Riding, and to him is due the credit of

developing the idea of classification by method and putting it on a practical and far more detailed basis than had hitherto been attempted.

C.R.O. issues as well as receives information regarding crime, and this chapter would be incomplete without brief reference to the police publications for which it is responsible. Some of these are circulated only to the Metropolitan police and neighbouring forces : others go to all forces. Under the first head come the "Informations," by which particulars of offences committed, persons arrested or wanted, property stolen, etc., are circulated twice daily to all police stations and read to the police as and when they parade for duty. There is also a Pawnbrokers' List, a descriptive list of articles lost or stolen (which have some identifying mark), distributed daily to every pawnbroker and dealer throughout the district.

The first in time and the most important of all police publications is the *Police Gazette*. It is the modern way of raising a hue and cry after a criminal. The original name of the *Gazette* when it first appeared, as a periodical bulletin issued from Bow Street by Sir John Fielding, was *The Public Hue and Cry*. It was a development of Sir John Fielding's earlier plan of advertising particulars of thefts and of persons wanted for crime in *The Public Advertiser* and getting magistrates all over the country to cut them out and post them in court-houses and market-places. At the beginning of the nineteenth century *The Public Hue and Cry* became *The Hue and Cry and Police Gazette*. It was issued at irregular intervals and was largely



used for advertising rewards and tracing deserters from the King's service. Just before the establishment of the Metropolitan police *The Hue and Cry and Police Gazette* changed its format (in 1828) and began to be issued once a week as *The Police Gazette*. In 1839 there were further changes which made it a more comprehensive medium for the circulation of information relating to crime.

Bow Street continued to have charge of the *Police Gazette* (the chief clerk of the Court acting as editor) until 1883, when the *Gazette* was transferred to Scotland Yard and began life afresh. It continued to be a weekly publication down to 1914, since when it has gradually developed into a daily issue with a stop press which enables information to be circulated in its pages within an hour or two of reaching Scotland Yard.

The *Gazette* is supplied without charge to the police of Great Britain, Ireland and certain imperial and foreign forces. It is not now, as it once was, on sale to the public but is issued solely for official use. It contains particulars (with photographs) of persons who are wanted for crime or whom the police are desirous of tracing, and also of those who are awaiting trial, in case they may be wanted elsewhere for other offences. The results of trials are also circulated, together with special warning notices about criminals, particulars of property stolen and recovered, etc.

Besides the *Gazette* proper, there are five special supplements to it which are practically separate publications. The most important is Supplement

“A”, originally known as *The Illustrated Circular*, which is issued fortnightly and gives the portraits, descriptions, methods and other particulars of expert and travelling criminals liberated from prison—in fact, all details sufficient to enable a provincial police force to make up a miniature crime index of its own. Three others are weekly issues devoted to convicts on licence or police supervisees wanted for failing to report, aliens and deserters. The fifth is a monthly supplement for stolen motor-cars, etc.

The work of *convict supervision* deserves further reference here, although it is no longer the main purpose of the criminal records of Scotland Yard, and there has been a steady fall in the last fifteen years in the number of persons sentenced to penal servitude or to a term of police supervision. Much of the success of the police in preventing and detecting crime still depends on the check kept on the movements and conduct of convicts on licence and other old offenders who come within the scope of the Prevention of Crime Acts. If a convict fails to report, or is found to be missing from his registered address, suspicion is at once directed to him and often leads to the discovery that he is the man who is wanted for a crime which is being investigated, or that he has committed some other crime. It is in C.R.O. that arrangements are made for the monthly reports and the enforcement of the other restrictions to which convicts are subject. But from the first the police engaged on convict supervision have kept before them the aim of befriending and reclaiming the convict. They work in co-operation with the Discharged Prisoners' Aid Associa-

tions and take every possible care not to place any hindrance in the way of the ex-convict earning or attempting to earn an honest living. All kinds of expedients are employed to avoid giving away a criminal who has started a new life among strangers, but, if a convict on licence returns to the neighbourhood where everyone knew him previously and is well aware that he has just come out of prison, it is almost impossible to conceal that he is reporting to the police. No class of the community has more sympathy with the criminal than the police, because none has better opportunity of knowing his good points as well as his bad. The old idea that the police hound criminals dies hard, but in real fact the police are often the best friends that an ex-convict possesses, and there is no class who are more ready than the police to "gently scan your brother man."

## Chapter X

### SPECIAL DUTIES AND AUXILIARY SERVICES

*River Police—Mounted Police—Hyde Park Police—  
Dockyard Police—Special Constabulary Reserve—  
Women Police*

#### *The River Police*

THE River police, who form the Thames division of the Metropolitan police and patrol London's waterway from Teddington Lock to Barking, are the oldest part of the force. It was in 1798 that "a Marine police" for the protection of shipping on the Thames was established by Patrick Colquhoun and John Harriott\* under the auspices of the West India merchants. The former is commemorated by a mural tablet in St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, as "the originator of the Marine police," but the idea of such a police seems to have originated with Harriott, who was the first magistrate at the River police office; it was taken up and worked out by Colquhoun, with the assistance and advice of that omniscient reformer, Jeremy Bentham.

In his *Treatise on the Police of the Metropolis*,

\* Harriott was a remarkable character who had been sailor, soldier, farmer and surveyor. He qualified himself for having charge of the marine police by crossing the Atlantic fourteen times, no mean achievement in the eighteenth century.

referred to in Chapter I, Colquhoun had included some account of the outrageous and practically unchecked depredations to which merchants and shipowners in the port of London were then exposed. In a separate work on *The Commerce and Police of the River Thames*, published in 1800, he gave a very detailed account of this former "scene of iniquity." As there were then practically no docks, the loading and unloading of vessels had to be done mostly by hoys and lighters, and a great part of the sailors, watermen, "lumpers," revenue officers, etc., employed about the river (estimated by Colquhoun to number 10,000) took a hand in plundering vessels and cargoes.

This state of affairs was brought up in Parliament in 1796-1797. At the beginning of 1798, the West India merchants approved of the scheme for policing the river submitted by Colquhoun, and the Government gave it a partial blessing. As a result, on the 2nd July, 1798, the Marine police office was opened at 259, Wapping New Stairs, where now stands Wapping Police Station, the headquarters of the Thames division. It was, at first, partly an official and partly a private organisation. The salaries of the magistrate, clerks and constables (amounting to about £1,000 a year) were defrayed by the Government; the West India merchants, at a cost of £4,000 a year, provided a number of water police and watchmen and organised a corps of lumpers (i.e. labourers employed in loading and unloading).

In 1800 an Act of Parliament "for the more effectual prevention of depredations in the River

Thames" (of which Bentham was the draftsman) placed the River police office on a statutory footing, like the other police offices, and the number of magistrates was increased to the regulation three. The Government also took over the cost of the water police, a body of surveyors or inspectors, river constables and quay guards, so much of the organisation as related to the control of lumpers being dissociated from the police office and remaining a private concern. Down to 1839 the River police office was one of the separate and independent police establishments which Peel had refrained from incorporating in his new system, but immediately after the passing of the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839 (which finally deprived the police magistrates of all executive functions), the River police were absorbed into the Metropolitan police and the judicial part of the establishment became the Thames police court.

The River police were a success from the beginning and put an end to the piracy and pillage which had previously prevailed. Their value has since been mainly for preventing crime; apart from crime, their general utility includes such duties as retrieving drowning persons or dead bodies, keeping order on Boat Race day, etc. The type of crime which they prevent and detect is mostly petty pilfering from river craft and waterside premises. They are numerically the smallest of the police divisions, with a strength of about two hundred, and are, to a great extent, drawn from men who have served in the Royal Navy, the Royal Marines or the Mercantile Marine. With their blue

reefer jackets and caps and weather-beaten countenances they present a markedly nautical and most workmanlike appearance.

The patrol of the river is carried out in five sections and there are five river stations—Wapping, the chief station, two sub-stations down-stream at Blackwall and Erith, and two up-stream at Waterloo Pier and Barnes. At one time the men were housed on hulks, but now Waterloo Pier station is the only floating one where, thanks to the wash of passing steamers and tugs, life has some resemblance to that on the ocean wave.

Down to 1885 police duty on the river was carried out in rowing and sailing boats, with occasional hiring of steamboats to keep the course on Boat Race day. There was also for a time a cutter to deal with sheep stealing on the Essex marshes. In 1885 steam-launches were introduced, and effected a great improvement in patrolling facilities. There are now three motor-launches, twenty-seven motor-boats (27 ft. long for the lower stretches of the river below London Bridge and 22 ft. for the upper stretches) and a few rowing boats for waterside work. The patrol is carried on continuously during the whole of the twenty-four hours and, as the boats pass up and down, watchful eyes in them are examining wharves, dock entrances, and other riverside premises, keeping a general look-out on the shipping and river craft and for signs of any river thieves or suspicious happenings of any kind. The police also deal with any barges, boats or other property which may be found adrift, give assistance to any persons or craft in difficulties,

and enforce the Thames Watermen's Acts. They do their best to prevent and detect smuggling of contraband goods, keep a look-out for and report cases of pollution of the river, and co-operate with wharf authorities and masters of vessels in carrying out the river regulations.

The River police work in conjunction with the Port of London Authority, whose jurisdiction covers the regulation of navigation, dredging, sanitary measures, pilotage, lighting and buoying, the removal of obstructions, the licensing of lighter-men and watermen and the registration and licensing of vessels. It has been suggested that the River police should be handed over to the Port of London Authority so as to have one single authority for all purposes on the river. But experience has shown conclusively that the operations of land and river police are inseparably connected, and that to detach the Thames police from their present position as part of the Metropolitan force would destroy rather than promote unity of control. The Port of London has its own police force, the Docks police, for the prevention of theft and the maintenance of order in the Docks, but, like the police maintained by the railway companies, they are a private force, exercising their powers only on the dock premises, and handing over their prisoners after arrest to the Metropolitan or the City police.

### *The Mounted Police*

The second oldest part of the Metropolitan police is the Mounted branch. Indeed, it can be counted



the oldest, by tracing its origin to the small horse patrol started by Sir John Fielding in 1763, which came to an end after a few years, or to the "two pursuit horses and proper pursuers," attached to the Bow Street office as early as 1758. The Bow Street horse patrol, which was incorporated in the Metropolitan police in October, 1836, dates from 1805, and was established when Sir Richard Ford was Chief Magistrate. These armed horsemen in cavalry cloaks, blue coats and trousers and red waistcoats, patrolled the main roads out of London and cheered the timid traveller on lonely Hounslow Heath or Finchley Common with the cry of "Bow Street Patrol."

On the establishment of the Metropolitan police, the superintendents of the outer divisions were mounted to enable them to get about their wide domains easily, and a good many of the inspectors and sergeants in the country districts were also given horses for purposes of supervision. The Mounted branch, properly so called, began when the Bow Street horse patrol was taken over. Those who were not superannuated were distributed among the outer divisions and employed, as before, mostly in patrolling the roads. Country patrol was regarded as the main purpose of the mounted police down to 1886, although they were occasionally mobilised in inner London, as, for example, in 1848 to deal with the Chartists, and they were used for the regulation of crowds when large meetings were held in Hyde Park and elsewhere.

After the unfortunate experience of the West End riot of February, 1886, they were increased in

numbers and stationed in the inner as well as the outer divisions, so as to be more readily available in future for any similar outbreak and for shepherding large gatherings, processions, etc. Their extraordinary value for these purposes has been demonstrated on innumerable occasions; and what even a single mounted man can do in clearing away a crowd was shown by the famous incident of the policeman on a white horse who brought order out of hopeless confusion when the crowd took possession of the field of play at the Football Cup Final at Wembley in 1923.

With the advent of the motor-car and the motorcycle, horsemen were no longer required for patrolling in the outer divisions. After the war, therefore, the mounted men were concentrated more in the central districts and, besides their other duties, have assisted in regulating traffic. They are found useful in dealing with traffic in certain conditions where their mobility and greater range of vision give them advantages over the man on foot.

In special emergencies the Mounted branch can be reinforced by a small reserve of constables trained in mounted duties, and during the General Strike of 1926 an auxiliary force of 300 volunteers was raised. The normal strength of the branch has never exceeded 350 and is at present (1929) under 250, having been reduced by about 100 men and horses since 1914. The men are nearly all ex-cavalrymen and, therefore, skilled horsemen, and they are under the control of a Deputy Assistant Commissioner who is an ex-cavalry officer. In 1920 a large and well equipped Mounted Police Training Establish-

ment was opened at Imber Court, Thames Ditton, where there is extensive accommodation, including a riding school, an open-air *manège*, etc. At Imber Court both men and horses receive periodical training. The horses are thus accustomed to crowds, flags, the noise of bands, etc., so that they carry out their work in the streets under perfect control, motionless as rocks in the flood of traffic or calmly indifferent to the surge and clamour of an excited mob on whose flanks they are exercising a gentle but steady pressure.

The mounted police are regarded by some as an unnecessary luxury, but those who have seen and admired their work would not agree with this verdict. As tanks are, it is to be hoped, never destined to become a part of the mechanical resources of the police, the Commissioner is never likely to do without a mounted force, so long as he may have to deal with large and disorderly gatherings in the streets. There are many other purposes for which a horse can never be ousted by the internal combustion engine. On the occasion of the Thames floods of January, 1928, for instance, the mounted police by riding their horses through the water were able to reach and rescue persons and animals who might otherwise have been drowned.

### *Special Employment*

The Metropolitan police, in common with every other force, exist primarily for the preservation of public order and the prevention or detection of crime in their local jurisdiction. They perform these func-

tions for the benefit of and at the charge of the community, every citizen having an equal right to police protection. It has, however, always been recognised that police may legitimately be employed to afford special protection, over and above that to which every member of the community is entitled, provided that the parties receiving such special protection bear the whole cost of it. The Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, gave power to appoint additional constables at the cost of the persons making application for them, and additional constables have been so appointed for special employment by Government departments, and also in a few cases by public companies and private firms or individuals.\* In all cases of such special employment a charge is made to cover the men's pay, clothing, contingent pension, etc.

### *Hyde Park*

What is frequently the most prominent but by no means the most important duty of the "A" division of the Metropolitan police is the policing of Hyde Park. This comes under the head of special employment, as it is not part of the ordinary public duties of the police. Hyde Park, although open to the public, is the property of the Crown, and the policing of it is undertaken on behalf of and at the cost of H.M. Commissioners of Works, in whom control of the Royal Parks is vested. Police are not employed in the other London parks. Ken-

\* See page 217 as to the special employment of the Metropolitan police in the dockyards, etc.

sington Gardens, the Green Park and St. James's Park were, for a time, policed like Hyde Park, but they are now, in common with Regent's Park and Primrose Hill and the numerous parks and gardens vested in the London County Council or other public authority, in charge of park-keepers who are not constables.

On special occasions large bodies of police are drafted into Hyde Park to maintain order, and the Park has been the scene of grave riots and other disturbances, but the need for the regular employment of police there arises mainly from the circumstances that the Park is open late at night, is crossed by public thoroughfares, and is the most widely resorted to of all the open-air playgrounds and meeting-places of London.

It was not until April, 1867, that Hyde Park and the Green Park were placed under the protection of the Metropolitan police. One of the principal duties of the park constables at first was to prevent enthusiastic volunteers from firing off their rifles indiscriminately, or carrying out military manœuvres in the wrong place—a striking instance of the subordination of the military to the civil in the British scheme of things.

Some seventy policemen are now employed in the Park, of whom a considerable proportion are engaged in regulating the traffic on the roads. A few constables are detailed to patrol the roads and paths, in order to prevent and detect flagrant acts of indecency or offences against the Park regulations. The police do not seek out such cases or leave the footpaths, except to deal with offences within view

of passers-by, who are entitled to protection.\* One or two of their arrests have received a great deal more attention than their importance deserved and have been made the basis of ill-informed attacks on the police in general. Hundreds of similar arrests are made in the course of the year and could not possibly meet with anything but general approval.

Whatever may be thought of the necessity for the employment of police in Hyde Park, or of the manner in which they carry out their difficult duties, these are matters which have little or no relation to the conduct or administration of the Metropolitan police as a whole. The unfortunate notoriety which Hyde Park cases have received is to be regretted in the interests of London, as well as of the Metropolitan police, for isolated and relatively trivial incidents have been so distorted and enlarged upon as to create a false and fantastic belief that Hyde Park is a place into which no decent person could venture after dark without serious risk of being pounced upon by police and accused of some disgraceful offence.

The police in Hyde Park have their usual powers and duties, under the ordinary law, in relation to breaches of the peace, acts of indecency or other offences. They also have, not by their own choice but as agents of the Commissioner of Works, the special duty of enforcing the regulations made by

\* "Passengers are not only entitled to free passage through the streets but are also entitled to pass through them without having their sense of decency affronted" (Macmillan Committee's report, 1928, para. 18). This is equally true of the parks.

the Commissioners under the Parks Regulation Acts, 1872 and 1926. Under these special Acts and regulations, improprieties which come under the general description of "behaving in a manner reasonably likely to offend against public decency" are offences that the police are charged to detect and prosecute, and they would be guilty of a breach of trust if they failed to do so.

### *Other Special Employment*

In addition to the police in Hyde Park, members of the force are in the special employment of other government departments, as, for example, the staff of detective officers employed in the Investigation department of the Post Office, but the number of police specially employed has been greatly reduced in recent years. A few are permanently employed by private firms or individuals, and considerable numbers are lent, from time to time, to preserve order at race meetings, football or cricket matches, exhibitions and other similar occasions involving the regulation of crowds on private or enclosed premises. On some of these occasions as, for example, the Derby or Ascot week, the lawn tennis championships at Wimbledon, or football matches at Twickenham, large bodies of police are also required to regulate traffic and maintain order on the approaches to the course or ground, but their services are a public charge. Broadly speaking, if the police are employed inside private premises they must be privately paid for; if outside, it is a matter of ordinary public duty.

*The Dockyard Police*

The Dockyard police form a separate branch of the Metropolitan police in which men spend practically their whole service, after a short period of preliminary training in London. In 1841 the policing of the naval dockyards at Deptford and Woolwich was taken over from the old dockyard police by the "R" division of the Metropolitan force, an arrangement extended in 1844 to Woolwich Arsenal. The naval and military authorities were anxious at the time to employ the London police at dockyards and military establishments generally, because of the disadvantages of a police with local ties and associations, but the Commissioners were averse to undertaking responsibilities outside the police district. It was not until 1860 that the policing of the dockyards was forced upon Sir Richard Mayne and five dockyard divisions of the Metropolitan police were formed, at Woolwich, Portsmouth, Devonport, Chatham and Sheerness, and Pembroke, the War Office establishments at Portsmouth, Devonport and Chatham being added in 1861.

The strength of the dockyard divisions (including under this head all naval or military employment of the Metropolitan police), was not more than about 700 at first, but after 1890 it gradually increased to twice this number. During the Great War a sixth dockyard division was formed in Scotland for the new naval base at Rosyth (with sub-stations at Crombie and Invergordon), and large reinforcements of Metropolitan police were sent to other dockyards and military stations and also to air stations, so that by 1916 this branch of



the Metropolitan police had attained a total of nearly 3,000. Since the War the need for economy has led the Admiralty, the War Office and the Air Ministry to replace the Metropolitan police by less highly trained and less expensive constabularies of their own, and there are now only three dockyard divisions, Portsmouth, Devonport and Chatham, at which some 500 Metropolitan police are employed by the Admiralty. The principal duties of the dockyard police are to prevent and detect thefts of Government stores or other offences against Crown property, exclude unauthorised persons from prohibited areas or premises, keep observation on suspected persons and generally enforce the regulations of the Admiralty and local naval authorities. Their presence in the dockyard does not involve any interference with the jurisdiction of the local police, as they do not exercise their powers outside the dockyard except in special cases.

### *Metropolitan Special Constabulary Reserve*

The Special Constabulary Reserve of the Metropolitan police has, perhaps, some claim to represent an even older branch of the service than the River police or the Mounted police. The appointment of special constables to supplement the ordinary constables dates only from the reign of Charles II, but the special constable of to-day may be regarded as the modern representative of the old parish constable, who gave his services without fee or reward, as a citizen discharging one of the duties of citizenship. Under the old police system, the unpaid constables constituted the regular police

and the paid deputies and watchmen were the auxiliaries. Nowadays the position is reversed. Special constables are good citizens who do not belong to the regular police but are sworn in to assist them, if necessary, in the preservation of the peace, the protection of property and the prevention of crime and disorder and, for these purposes, they have all the powers of regular constables. The English special constable is *sui generis*, a peculiarity of the English police service which emphasises its "civilian" character. Under the Special Constables Act of 1831, persons nominated by the local justices as special constables in an emergency are under obligation to serve and may be punished for refusal to do so, but, whenever the need for special constables has arisen, volunteers have more than met all needs.

Prior to 1914, special constables were appointed in London under the Act of 1831 only when tumults, riots, etc., had taken place or were apprehended. On many notable occasions in the past, as, for example, the Chartist alarm of 1848, the Fenian scare of 1867-8, the unemployed disturbances of 1887 and the Railway Strike of 1911, the authorities in London appealed for and obtained large numbers of special constables, who reinforced the regular police for the time being and were discharged as soon as the emergency was over.

Immediately on the outbreak of the Great War, a force of special constables was organised in London under the late Colonel Sir Edward Ward, Bart., who, after a distinguished career in the Army Service Corps, had been Secretary of the War Office from

1902 to 1912. That no better or more prescient organiser could well have been chosen is proved by the fact that both the War force of "specials" and the post-war Reserve have been carried on with little or no material change from the lines he laid down in the hurried days of August, 1914. The Special Constables Act, 1914, was passed to authorise the appointment of special constables irrespective of whether any riot, etc., was apprehended, and there is now, under this Act and the Special Constables Act 1923, a general power to appoint and maintain a body of special constables to supplement the regular police force, if need be.

During the War a unit of special constables was attached to nearly every Metropolitan police station, ranging from 50 to 500 men. Some of them did police work during the day, but most were busy men who gave up their nights and distinguished themselves by their self-sacrificing and courageous work on protection duty and in aid raids. After the War, the Metropolitan Special Constabulary were formed into a permanent force, as the Metropolitan Special Constabulary Reserve. The Reserve consists of men who are over 20 and not more than 50, and there is an auxiliary body to which men are automatically transferred from the Reserve on reaching the age of 50.

- Normally, members of the Special Constabulary Reserve are not called upon to perform active police duty, but they often give voluntary service on ceremonial and other occasions. They act under the direction of and in the closest co-operation with the regular police, but, as a body, they are under the

Commandant-in-Chief of the Special Constabulary, who has an office and staff at Scotland Yard, and they have their own divisional officers. The general plan of their local organisation is much the same as that of the regular police, and, to facilitate co-operation, the local office of the Special Constabulary division, subdivision or section is, wherever practicable, at the local police station.

The uniform and equipment of a special constable are similar to those of a regular policeman, but a cap is worn instead of a helmet. Special constables do not ordinarily receive any retaining fee or other payment, but, when called upon for duty, they are eligible to receive allowances by way of repayment of expenses, and, if incapacitated by injury received on duty, are entitled to pension or gratuity.

The strength of the Special Constabulary Reserve is (1929) about 12,000 and there are another 3,000 in the auxiliary reserve. The General Strike of 1926 demonstrated that, thanks largely to the permanent organisation of the Reserve, the "specials" in London can rapidly expand to an effective force of fifty or sixty thousand and render invaluable service in the preservation of order.

### *Women Police*

Whatever section of the Metropolitan police may rightly claim to be the oldest, there is very properly no question as to the youthfulness of the Women police.

The introduction of women into the police, for employment in much the same capacity as male constables, was brought about, or at least accelerated, by the War. Women have long been associated

with the police in other capacities, such as that of matron at a police station, to look after or search female prisoners. But the value of women for more responsible police work may be said to have been first recognised in the Metropolitan police when Sir Edward Henry made arrangements for the services of a Lady Assistant to be available for taking statements from girls and young children in certain cases. This special work is now shared between the Lady Assistant and the women police. The former has charge of a Home, where girl witnesses are lodged and cared for: this is maintained partly by the Police Fund and partly by the Mary Leaf Fund and private donations.

The regular employment of women as police was not suggested until just before the War. During the War an unofficial organisation, known as "the National Union of Women Workers," employed women patrols on preventive work in the vicinity of military camps and in parks, etc. A small number of these patrols were placed at the disposal of the Commissioner, and the police gave any necessary assistance, not only to them but also to the members of another organisation, "the Women's Auxiliary Service," which was originally known as "the Women Police Service." In 1916 the Home Office approved of the Commissioner taking a small number of the patrols belonging to the National Union of Women Workers into official employment, and a grant was also made from the Police Fund in aid of the funds of the N.U.W.W. This led in October, 1918, under the new Commissioner (Sir Nevil Macready), to the formation of

a small body of women patrols as an integral part of the Metropolitan police. These patrols, numbering 100, under a superintendent, one assistant superintendent, and ten patrol leaders, were selected from amongst the members of the two organisations already mentioned and a third known as "the Women Police Volunteers." They were not sworn in as constables and their appointment was on a temporary basis. In 1922 it was decided, as part of the scheme for economies in police expenditure adopted on the recommendation of the Geddes Committee, to disband the women patrols, but, after debate in Parliament on the subject, the Home Secretary agreed that twenty should be retained as a nucleus. At the same time their position was altered. They were given powers of arrest and sworn in as constables and, instead of forming a separate body under their own superintendent, they were posted to certain divisions for employment at the discretion of the divisional superintendent. The women constables in the Metropolitan police now number fifty, and it is possible that they will grow into a larger body, in view of the recommendations of the Lee Commission. It may be added that, although women police are employed occasionally on detective work, there are no women in the C.I.D.: *Lady Molly of Scotland Yard* has never had a counterpart in real life.

## Chapter XI

### THE POLICE AND PUBLIC CARRIAGES

A BRANCH of the work of the Metropolitan police on which the safety and convenience of the travelling public largely depend is that relating to public carriages. The term "public carriages" means hackney carriages, i.e. cabs, and stage carriages, the latter term including omnibuses, tramcars and charabancs.\* In London all these vehicles, if they ply for hire, together with their drivers and conductors, are licensed and supervised by the Commissioner of Police, who derives his powers, either directly or through the Home Secretary, from special Acts applying to London. In other towns the licensing of public carriages is a municipal function, although carried out in many places by the police on behalf of the local authority.

Hackney coaches, the precursors of hackney carriages, were introduced into London in Stuart times, when their advent drove the watermen, whose craft were the public carriages of the time, to protest against these new competitors. A hackney coach was generally a discarded family coach, often still bearing the arms of the noble family to which it had belonged. They were supposed to stand for hire only in Inn Yards and such places. Pepys

\* The main distinction between a hackney carriage and a stage carriage was that the latter was one in which each passenger was charged a separate fare.

records in his diary on November 7th, 1660: "Notwithstanding that this was the first day of the King's proclamation against hackney coaches coming into the streets to stand to be hired, yet I got one to carry me home."

The regulation of hackney coaches was one of the earliest functions to be included within the scope of the "police" of a town, in the old sense of the word. In Westminster, before the word "police" had even crossed the Channel, the seventeenth-century "Commissioners of Scotland Yard" had the duty of licensing hackney coaches.\* From 1710 until 1831 the duty rested with a Board of Special Commissioners, who constituted the Hackney Coach Office, and whose functions were "both of the nature of a Revenue Office and Office of Police." They licensed hackney coaches and hackney or sedan chairs, made bye-laws regulating the proprietors, and dealt with complaints by and against hackney coachmen or chairmen.

Hackney coaches were heavily taxed and restricted in numbers and enjoyed a monopoly down to 1832. The monopoly area was the "Cities of London and Westminster and the Suburbs thereof, and such adjoining parishes and places as were comprised within the weekly Bills of Mortality."† Down to 1832 the new hackney carriages or cabs were allowed to ply only outside this area.

The forerunner of the omnibus was the short stage

\* See page 31.

† The Bills of Mortality were an official return of deaths published weekly for parishes in and around London, numbering over a hundred.



coach which in the early part of the last century was the common method of conveyance from London to the suburbs, but stage coaches were not the subject of any regulations such as applied to hackney coaches.

The replacement of hackney coaches and stage coaches by cabs and omnibuses, as we know them to-day, practically coincided with the advent of the Metropolitan police force. The "cabriolet," a two-wheeled vehicle, was introduced from France about 1820, and it was in July, 1829, simultaneously with the opening of the new police office in Whitehall Place, that there appeared on the London streets the first real omnibus—the "Shillibeer," called after the proprietor, an English coachbuilder with a business in Paris.\*

The first Hackney Carriage Act for London was that of 1831 and the first Stage Carriage Act was passed in 1832. The Act of 1831 applied to an area of five miles from the General Post Office, extended in 1838 to ten miles; since 1843 the area of public carriage legislation has been the whole of the City and Metropolitan police districts. Under the Act of 1831 the Hackney Coach Office established in 1710 was abolished; the licensing of hackney carriages was transferred to the Commissioners of Stamps, who already licensed stage carriages for revenue purposes, and the regulation of the conduct

\* There had been omnibuses in Paris since 1663; and it was in Paris that the London General Omnibus Company—which was launched in London in 1856 on a larger scale than any previous omnibus company—had been first registered as the "Compagnie Générale des omnibus de Londres."

of proprietors and drivers became a matter for the Metropolitan Police Courts. The licensing of public carriages was at that date looked upon principally as a revenue matter; the rates of duty were heavy, and it was not until 1869 that, under the Metropolitan Public Carriage Act of that year, they were replaced by licensing fees much less in amount.\*

Prior to 1838, drivers and conductors were not licensed, but only controlled through the proprietors. An Act of 1838 required them to be licensed and for this purpose instituted the Office of Registrar of Metropolitan Public Carriages, who was appointed by the Home Secretary. In 1843, by the London Hackney Carriage Act of that year, the Commissioner of Police was first brought in, as the authority to appoint standings for hackney carriages, in other words, cab ranks. In 1850 another Hackney Carriage Act transferred to the Commissioner the duties of the Registrar of Public Carriages, and the Public Carriage branch was formed at Scotland Yard. The licensing of the vehicles remained for nearly twenty years longer with the Commissioners of Excise (as the Commissioners of Stamps were now called), but, under an Act of 1853, the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Police was extended by making the Excise licence conditional upon the Commissioner being satisfied as to the fitness of the vehicle.

In 1869 the regulation of public carriages was put on its present footing, all licensing functions in respect of public carriages becoming vested in the

\* £2 for the vehicle and 5s. for the driver or conductor.

Commissioner of Police in consequence of the Public Carriage Act of that year. It is from this Act of 1869, in conjunction with the London Cab and Stage Carriage Act of 1907 and the statutory regulations for cabs and stage carriages (known as the "Cab Order"), that the Commissioner's present functions are mainly derived. The Act of 1869 constituted the Home Secretary the licensing authority, but he delegates his powers to the Commissioner, to be exercised in accordance with the regulations made by the Secretary of State under the Acts.

The work of licensing and supervising all vehicles which ply for hire and their drivers and conductors, has accordingly been carried out in the Metropolitan police district since 1869 by the Public Carriage branch of the Metropolitan police. The branch is directed by Assistant Commissioner "B" and comprises about 120 police of all ranks from constable to superintendent. It is recruited from the general body of constables. Every applicant must first have served two years on ordinary police duties in a division, and preference is given to those who have had some experience in motor engineering or similar trades before joining the police. After admission to the branch, a constable is required to attend evening classes in motor engineering at one of the Polytechnic Schools and must obtain a first class certificate before he can be promoted. The staff are mainly employed at the Public Carriage Office in the new police building in Lambeth Road; but, for the local administration of the Public Carriage Acts, the police district is divided into

twelve areas, each of which is under a district inspector with an office at a local police station.

Before the advent of the mechanically propelled vehicle the work of the Public Carriage branch required little beyond a certain horse-sense, but it has now become highly specialised, involving a comprehensive knowledge of statute and case law and of the mechanism of motor omnibuses, motor-cabs, charabancs and electric tramway cars. This is a development of the last thirty years. The electric tramcar and motor omnibus were first seen in 1899, after earlier and short-lived ventures in steam 'buses; five years later, in 1904, the replacement of horse-drawn by petrol-driven omnibuses began in earnest, and became rapid after the early tendency to progress crabwise on a greasy day had been overcome. At the end of the nineteenth century there were about 5,000 horse-drawn omnibuses and trams in London. By 1914 less than a hundred of these horsed conveyances were left, and there were over 3,000 motor omnibuses and nearly 3,000 electric tramcars. Since then the number of motor omnibuses has increased to about 6,000 while the electric tramcars are rather fewer—about 2,700; the horse 'bus has long disappeared, although there are still two horse-drawn brakes licensed.

A few electrically propelled cabs were introduced experimentally in 1897 and 1898, but the first petrol motor-cab was licensed in 1903. There were then over 11,000 horse-cabs, of which about two-thirds were hansoms and one-third four-wheelers (clarences). By 1914 the cabs of London had fallen away to about 8,500, of which over 7,000

were motor-cabs and only some 200 were hansoms. Now (1929) the total number of cabs licensed in London is about 8,000 (one cab to every 1,000 of the population); there are still a hundred survivors of the old four-wheeled clarence or "growler" and eight hansoms.

The Public Carriage Acts and the Cab and Stage Carriage Order give the Commissioner as licensing authority wide discretionary powers to require a certain standard of fitness in any vehicle which he licenses. A plate is fixed on every licensed vehicle to show that it has been duly licensed by the Commissioner, and, without this plate, no public service vehicle may ply for hire in the district. The first year of the exercise of these powers (1870) resulted in over fifteen hundred hackney carriages being removed from the streets of London as unfit for public use.

Detailed "Conditions of Fitness," based on police experience and expert advice, have been drawn up to guide manufacturers and others. These are aimed generally at securing safety in operation, convenience of other traffic, and the comfort of the travelling public. For example, in the case of cabs or omnibuses the maximum length and width of the vehicle and the minimum seat dimensions per passenger are laid down; a taxicab must be capable of being turned, without reversing, in a twenty-five feet roadway; and special brakes are required on omnibuses intended to ply on routes involving long or steep hills. Any alteration or the addition of any special appliance or fitting is subject to approval; and advertisements may be placed only in authorised positions.

When a new type of public service vehicle has been designed, the specification and a specimen vehicle must be submitted to Scotland Yard for examination and rigorous test. A motor engineer of high standing acts as technical adviser to the Commissioner and is consulted in doubtful or difficult cases. If the design and the specimen vehicle are satisfactory, the type is approved and a licence is granted in respect of the new vehicle: subsequent vehicles of the same type are inspected by the district inspectors, who are supplied with a complete description and specification.

Every public service vehicle in London is not only licensed annually, but is subject to periodical examination and test, and is also under constant observation by the police. If, as a result of police inspection, or of a complaint by the public, a vehicle is found defective in any way, an "unfit" notice is served on the proprietor, and the vehicle may not be used again until it has been repaired and passed as fit. In 1928 about 1,500 public carriages failed to pass examination on being presented for licensing, and as many as 20,000 "unfit" notices may be served in the course of a year. A motor omnibus before being licensed, is subjected to a special audition before a Committee who decide whether its noise is too noisy.

Stage carriages which make journeys that are only partly within the police district must be licensed if they ply for hire within it; this brings certain long distance charabancs within the supervision of the Metropolitan police.\* A pro-

\*The Road Traffic Bill, promulgated in draft form by the Ministry of Transport in 1927, aims at standardisation and uniformity of control for omnibuses and charabancs throughout the country.

prietor who is prepared to maintain his vehicles at a high standard recognises that the "Police Plate" on a vehicle gives the public confidence. On the other hand, proprietors of certain vehicles who cannot or do not wish to obtain licences for them resort to various ingenious devices so as not technically to "ply for hire" within the district. The police are not the only watch-dogs on such practices. The licensed men are jealous of the privileges for which they pay by compliance with somewhat rigorous requirements: evasions do not go long undetected, and the result is sometimes an interesting legal argument in the Courts as to whether standing in a particular place, or issuing a particular form of ticket, in fact constitutes "plying for hire." In one case Mr. Justice Darling was provoked to observe: "I should not describe that as an attempt to evade an Act of Parliament. It is a deliberate attempt to drive an omnibus through it."

Licences from the Commissioner (in addition to the ordinary driving and revenue licences) have to be obtained by the proprietor of every public carriage and also by the driver and conductor, and exhaustive inquiries are made to establish the good character and general fitness\* of all applicants for licences. Licences are not issued to drivers until they have been tested and found proficient in driving, the types of vehicles which they are fit to

\* In the case of proprietors, this includes financial stability. Thus proprietors of all omnibuses and cabs licensed in London are required to make satisfactory arrangements, by insurance or otherwise, to meet their possible liability for third party risks.

drive being entered on the licences. A comprehensive topographical, or "knowledge of London" examination must also be passed by all taxicab drivers. The minimum age for a driver is 21 and for a conductor 20; there is no maximum age, but drivers over 50 are subject to periodical medical examination as to their continuing fitness. With his licence every driver or conductor receives a numbered metal badge which he is bound to wear conspicuously, and a copy of an Abstract of the laws relating to hackney carriages, with which he is supposed to acquaint himself.

All drivers and conductors are photographed in the Public Carriage Office and a copy of the photograph is pasted on the licence. Their addresses are registered, and the name and address of any driver or conductor can be obtained on application to the Commissioner. A licence is valid for a year, and renewal may be refused, if inquiry discloses that the holder has not conducted himself properly. A licence may also be revoked at any time during its currency by a Court, or by the Commissioner,\* who also suspends licences for varying periods in cases of misconduct. A Licensing Committee sits regularly at Scotland Yard to investigate complaints against drivers and conductors and advise the Commissioner thereon.

There is no arbitrary limitation of the numbers either of vehicles or of men to whom licences are issued. There are approximately two drivers and

\* On the express recommendation of the Committee of 1895 first offences of a minor character by licensed men are not taken to Court but are dealt with by caution from the Commissioner.



two conductors licensed for every stage carriage in the Metropolitan police district; while the proportion of cab drivers to cabs is in the neighbourhood of 5 : 4.\* About half the taxicabs now belong to owner-drivers; in many cases two men take out one cab in shifts and there is no glut of drivers for the cabs owned by the larger proprietors. It has frequently been urged, not only by those who consider cabs a big factor in the congestion of the streets, but also by a section of the trade, on economic grounds, that the numbers of vehicles and of men licensed should be limited. The point has been exhaustively examined by various committees who have come to the conclusion that limitation would not be in the public interest.

There is likewise no limitation in the number of omnibuses which may be licensed, although the London Traffic Act of 1924 has strictly limited their plying in the area covered by the Act. Early Acts, indeed, expressly protected stage carriages from restriction in number, and, prior to 1924, the only limitations imposed were that the vehicle and the route had to be approved by the Commissioner. After the War, independent omnibus proprietors began to dispute the practical monopoly of the "Combine" (the London General Omnibus Company and the Underground Railways), and soon the streets were well on the way to being flooded with these large vehicles. The London Traffic Act of 1924 was passed to remedy the growing congestion of traffic, and the first step was to stabilise the

\* About 48,150 licences were issued in 1928 to drivers (cabs and omnibuses) and conductors.

then existing position. Detailed schedules of the routes of all omnibuses must now be deposited with the Commissioner; only regular services may be operated, and no additional omnibuses may be placed on any of the more important streets. One of the effects of this was to stop the so-called "pirate" from roving about, skimming the cream off the best routes at the busiest times; it also made it impossible for the larger companies to send out additional vehicles to "nurse" the pirate, as had sometimes been the practice.

Cab standings or ranks are fixed by the Commissioner, under powers given by the Hackney Carriage Acts of 1843, 1850, 1853 and 1869, and it is an offence for a driver to ply for hire elsewhere. Cab ranks are by law required to be in the centre of the road, except where there are houses on one side only. The great majority of cab ranks are within three miles of Charing Cross. The authorised ranks could accommodate three-quarters of the cabs licensed, but the growth of underground railways and motor omnibus transport has diminished the "business area" for cabs, and those ranks at which business is most brisk are naturally the most popular with the drivers; as a result, there is a constant cry for more ranks in the West End. Every Committee which has considered the "crawling cab" nuisance\* has recommended the establishment of more ranks in Central London as the solution;

\* The crawling cab has been a thorn in the flesh of those responsible for the streets since Captain Baily first stationed his hackney coaches in the Strand in 1634. It was not until 1927 that the Ministry of Transport arrived at a satisfactory definition of "crawling" for the purpose of the Regulations under the London Traffic Act.

but, although the matter is continually under review, the conditions make it impossible to satisfy the demand in this area. There is, in addition to the ranks assigned by the Commissioner, accommodation for a number of cabs at the principal railway stations. Formerly only certain cabs had the privilege of using the railway stations, but this system was abolished in 1907.

The fares of cabs are fixed by the Home Secretary, in the schedules to the Cab Order, and the scales are revised from time to time as conditions may require. A copy of the scale of fares must be displayed inside every cab, and it is an offence for a driver to demand more than the legal fare. The present rate of 9*d.* a mile for taxicabs was fixed in 1927.

The "cab radius" (fixed by the Act of 1853 as a radius of four miles from Charing Cross) is the area within which cabs without taximeters carry passengers at the minimum rate of 6*d.* a mile. In the days of the horse cab a knowledge of the boundaries of the four mile radius was of considerable assistance to cab riders. An extension of the area was constantly urged, but, as the four mile radius has no application except to horse cabs, it has ceased to be of much importance.

The taximeter, or mechanical fare recorder, was first mooted as early as 1858. It was successfully introduced in Germany for horse cabs in 1891 and appeared in London on horse cabs in 1899, but was strongly opposed by the Cab Drivers' Union. Its general adoption began in Paris in 1904, and in London in 1907, when taximeters of the horo-kilo-

métrique type (which record the fare by a combination of time and distance) were made compulsory on motor cabs. Every taximeter has to be approved by the Commissioner; it is tested by the police on the cab on which it is to be used and sealed to prevent any tampering with it. New types are passed after they have been scientifically tested at the National Physical Laboratory. Taximeters are expensive machines\* and are hired out to the cab owners by the manufacturers, who retain the ownership and keep them in repair.

In the case of certain tramway and other undertakings maximum rates of fares are fixed by statute; otherwise the rates for stage carriages are governed by competition; but the law requires that, whatever fares are charged, they must be conspicuously displayed inside the vehicle for the guidance of passengers. The early "pirates" had lived up to their name, unsuspecting passengers being trapped and bullied into paying exorbitant fares; and it was largely these practices which led to the licensing of drivers and conductors. Fare boards are subject to approval by the Commissioner, and the fare stages shown are required to be definite and beyond dispute.

Tickets are issued on the initiative of the omnibus and tramcar proprietors and not by any legal requirement. Their first general introduction in 1891 led to a strike of drivers and conductors, whose earnings were considerably reduced when they had only their wages without the extra amount which

\* Taximeters of the types most generally in use in London contain from 750 to 1,000 parts.

many had previously managed to pilfer. The strike failed, however, and the ticket system became universal.

Property left inside public carriages is dealt with by the police. At the end of each hiring or journey the driver of a cab and the driver or conductor of a stage carriage must search the vehicle and must deposit at a police station within twenty-four hours any property he finds. The property is then carefully recorded and sealed, and transmitted to the Lost Property Office, whence the loser may recover it, subject to payment of a small charge and of a reward (normally at the rate of 2s. 6d. in the £ on the value) to the driver or conductor who found it; if the property is not claimed within three months, the depositor may have it or it may be sold.

## Chapter XII

### THE POLICE AND TRAFFIC CONTROL

A hundred years ago traffic in Oxford Street and the Strand was regulated and shoppers protected from the importunity of beggars and other annoyances by a species of beadle known as "street-keepers." They can be regarded as part of the crusade against beggars which Elia lamented: "From the crowded crossing, from the corners of streets and turnings of alleys, the parting Genius of Beggary is with sighing sent."\*

The name and functions of a streetkeeper were taken over in 1829 by the new police, and their "Move on" was more unrelenting than any that the beggars had ever known before; but "mendicants" and "mendicity," words that have now dropped out of the policeman's vocabulary, would still have figured prominently in any account of police activities and in any list of highway obstructions fifty or sixty years ago. Beggars have, however, ceased to be among the sights of the Metropolis, and if Lamb were to revisit London, he would find that it was the police and not the beggars who were now the "salutary checks and

\* "Complaint on the Decay of Beggars in the Metropolis" in the Essays of Elia. "To the disgrace of the police there is a string of the most impudent and profligate beggars extending every night from Charing Cross to the Houses of Parliament." *The Observer*, April 5th, 1829.

pauses to the high and rushing tide of greasy citizenry."

The name "streetkeeper" has fallen into disuse, but the policeman is still in many ways keeper of the street. He is to be found there at his patrol or post, night and day, ready to answer any call and to risk life or limb for the safety of others. How often the risk is run may be gathered from the fact that in recent years the number of Metropolitan police injured on duty has been about 2,500 a year, over 12 per cent. of the force.

Naturally, therefore, it is upon the policeman that the duty of regulating traffic in the streets has devolved. There has been much discussion of a proposal to transfer the duty to "traffic guards" or "guides," or some other special traffic corps, constituted possibly of pensioned policemen or ex-service men. This would be an expensive arrangement, if the number of regular police required in the streets could not be correspondingly reduced, and there would be no advantage in it if the only result was to have an all-round policeman on the pavement and another for traffic only in the middle of the road. It also has to be borne in mind that the success which has marked traffic control by the police has depended not so much on legal sanctions, as on the moral authority which, in the course of a hundred years, has come to be associated with the policeman's uniform, backed by the general powers and prestige of the police. If traffic signals are to be of any value, it is essential that they should be always and unhesitatingly obeyed. It is open to

question how far the almost automatic response which the traffic now gives to the policeman's hand could be relied upon if the hand was not that of a policeman.

There are other considerations which point to traffic control, in London at all events, being properly a police function. Amongst these it must not be overlooked that stage and hackney carriages (omnibuses and cabs) are subject to a large measure of police control, as explained in the last chapter, and they have been the most prominent elements in the problems of London traffic, from the Royal Proclamations of Stuart times on the subject of hackney coaches to the London Traffic Act of 1924, with its drastic restrictions of omnibus services which the police have to enforce.

Prior to the Highway Act of 1835, which *inter alia* introduced "the rule of the road" and made "furious driving" a statutory offence, the sum total of the law behind traffic regulation was contained in the Sunday Observance Acts of the seventeenth century and the provisions in regard to stage and hackney carriages. Offences by drivers or conductors of such carriages and obstructions of the highway were among the subjects dealt with in the earliest instructions and orders issued to the Metropolitan police, but no other duties in connection with traffic are mentioned. The extent, however, to which the new police had to preserve order by regulating traffic was soon found to be considerable. They had to maintain an orderly flow of traffic in Westminster, because of the Royal Palaces, Parliament, the Law Courts and the



Government offices, and they had to deal with congestion outside theatres and places of entertainment, or wherever throngs gathered. They were also called upon to keep the streets clear on special occasions, particularly in 1838, the year of Queen Victoria's Coronation. On Coronation Day itself nearly two-thirds of the force were thus employed and special constables had to be enrolled to do the ordinary police duty in the divisions.

Powers to regulate the traffic on special occasions and in special places were accordingly amongst those given to the police by the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839. It enacted (Section 52) that the Commissioner of Police should have power—

“from time to time, and as occasion shall require, to make regulations for the route to be observed by all carts, carriages, horses and persons, and for preventing obstruction of the streets and thoroughfares within the Metropolitan Police District in all times of public processions, public rejoicings, or illuminations, and also to give directions to the constables for keeping order and for preventing any obstruction of the thoroughfares in the immediate neighbourhood of the Royal Palaces and the public offices, the High Court of Parliament, the Courts of Law and Equity, the theatres and other places of public resort, and in any case when the streets or thoroughfares may be thronged or may be liable to be obstructed.”

This is the statutory authority under which the Commissioner of Police, to this day, issues both

special regulations for the traffic on the occasion of public events in London and standing regulations for traffic outside the principal theatres.

After 1839, the London Hackney Carriage Acts of 1843, 1850, and 1853, met the most pressing traffic problems of the time by conferring on the police increasing powers for dealing with obstruction by omnibuses and cabs and regulating the conduct of their drivers and conductors. In 1851, the Great Exhibition gave the Metropolitan police their first opportunities of traffic control on a large scale. Several hundred additional constables were specially employed for the period of the Exhibition, mainly to control the traffic. Some of the public resented the assumption of new functions by the police, and the Commissioners did not feel too sure of their ground. A Police Order of the 19th June, 1851, informed the force that—

“it was complained that persons riding and driving are prevented without cause from passing along the streets, especially at Hyde Park Corner and in the streets near the Park, also that the Police by holding out their arms to make signals frighten the horses, and that such signals are not understood.”

These early attempts at a code of traffic signals may have caused horses to shake their heads, but with the general public the police established a very good understanding. The manner in which they acquitted themselves in 1851 received universal praise from foreigners and natives alike, and first brought prominently before the world the new

policeman and the new system of police which England had evolved.

It may be mentioned, in passing, that the police had been specially cautioned against using "any uncivil or jeering language," a warning which was made more specific in 1856, when they were told that—"If a Cabdriver is spoken to by the Police, he is to be called "Cabdriver," and the vulgar offensive word "Cabby" is never to be used by the Police." There does not appear to have been any corresponding injunction against the use of the term "Bobby" by a cabman, nor was there likely to be, as it has never been other than a term of endearment.

It was for the neighbourhood of Hyde Park that traffic control was particularly required in 1851, but, from a much earlier date, special control of everyday traffic had been called for at Hyde Park Corner and Parliament Square, the scenes in recent years of two of the first "roundabout" systems for the relief of traffic congestion. It was necessary to deal with the assembly of carriages by Hyde Park Corner during the season, and special supervision of the traffic was required in the vicinity of Parliament Square. The latter duty has been imposed on the police since 1857 by a Sessional Order of the House of Commons to the Commissioner of Police, requiring him to see that the passages through the streets leading to the House are kept free and open.

In 1863 there was a new development in connection with police regulation of traffic. The City of London Traffic Regulation Act of that year gave power to the City authorities to regulate the routes

of omnibuses, vans and other carriages, and to restrict the use of large vehicles or those with large and projecting loads. This Act was replaced in 1867 by the Metropolitan Streets Act, which applied to the City and the present County of London. The principle of the Act was that traffic regulations should be made by the Commissioners of the Metropolitan and City police, subject to approval by the Home Secretary, to ameliorate the worst causes of congestion, to wit, the driving of cattle in the streets, standing carts and delivery vans, scavenging during the daytime, loitering cabs, indiscriminate stopping of omnibuses, etc. The first practice has ceased to be one of the ordinary daytime amenities of central London, but the others are still matters requiring regulation.

Two areas of the Metropolis were defined by the Act of 1867. A knowledge of them is not widespread. They are :

(i) *The general limits*—such part of the county of London as is within a radius of four miles from Charing Cross (identical with the “cab radius”), extended in 1885 to six miles ;

(ii) *The special limits*—streets within the general limits specially named by order of the Commissioner.

If a street is within “the special limits” the fact is denoted by plates affixed to lamp-posts or other conspicuous places. The last order naming the streets which are to be regarded as within the special limits is that made in October, 1909, which

covers practically all the busy streets of the inner and crowded parts of the Metropolis.

The regulations which have been made under the Act of 1867 and the amending Act of 1885 are aimed at the main causes of obstruction, those for the special limits being naturally more strict than those for the general limits.

The regulations for the general limits require omnibuses to stop on the near side of the road, prohibit goods or other articles from being left on the footway or other part of the street, and regulate the use of the streets by costermongers, hawkers, etc. The regulations for the special limits prohibit the delivery of coal, or of beer in casks, between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. and the passage between 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. of specially large or cumbersome vehicles, such as carts with loads of timber, poles or ladders.

It was in the 'sixties that it became a regular part of police duty to keep crossings clear for pedestrians and regulate the flow of traffic at important street junctions. When the practice of stationing constables at fixed points was introduced in 1869 some of these pointsmen had to pay a good deal of attention to traffic, and fixed points had begun in many cases to be traffic points long before the advent of the motor-car.

Even in those far-off and to us snail-like days, excessive speed had to be checked by the police. The first Annual Report of the Commissioner (for 1869) makes special mention of the very large number of summonses taken out for furious and reckless driving. The casualties, however, were

negligible in comparison with the slaughter to-day. In the five years 1866-1870 the number of people run over and killed in the London streets annually averaged 106, and the number injured 1,500. For the ten years 1891-1900 the annual average of killed was 160 and injured 7,730. After 1900 the figures rapidly rose to the present massacre rate. In 1918 612 were killed and 15,091 injured. In 1927 the numbers were 1,056 killed and 48,049 injured and in 1928 1,238 killed and 54,461 injured.

The motor-car revolutionised the traffic duties of the police. The revolution began with the Motor-car Act of 1903, under which the police were given the responsibility of enforcing the speed limit and of taking proceedings for breaches of the registration and licensing regulations. Their prosecuting activities were thereby extended to classes of the population with whom they had hitherto had little to do. Policemen with measured speed controls and chronographs brought the force before the public in a new light, and their popularity suffered from their forsaking of the old tradition that they did not "set traps for people."

The same year (1903) saw the appointment of a Royal Commission on the means of locomotion and transport in London, whose report in 1905 was the first definite move towards supplementing police regulation of London's traffic by the creation of a central authority to control its development and deal more effectively with the main causes of obstruction. The Commission made a most exhaustive study of the subject (in eleven large volumes) and, besides advising the appointment of

a London Traffic Board, made a number of recommendations on such subjects as the breaking up of streets, standing vehicles, crawling cabs, slow-moving traffic, etc., but action on these matters had mostly to wait until after the War. One result of their labours was the creation of a Traffic Branch at the Board of Trade, which had no executive powers but did useful service in planning new arterial roads and generally studying the traffic problem.

Meanwhile the traffic problem was being rapidly intensified; the electric tramways were extended inwards as well as outwards, and motor omnibuses and motor-cabs multiplied exceedingly. Other Committees, sitting in 1906 and 1912, under pressure of public uneasiness about the new motor-omnibus traffic, urged that omnibus routes should be restricted; but their recommendations bore no immediate fruit, and then came the War, which suspended attempts to deal with the question on any considered basis, while bringing about all sorts of changes in the traffic and the transport services of London.

The end of the War found congestion and overcrowding of vehicles at the "peak-load" hours so bad that the parliamentary committee which investigated it in 1919 (under the chairmanship of Mr. Kennedy Jones, M.P.) described it as a public scandal and recommended in the strongest possible terms the creation of a London Traffic Authority. An Advisory Committee on London Traffic was formed and in 1924 the London Traffic Act was passed. This Act was the beginning of a new era. Previously

the police had tackled the most pressing traffic problems with the aid of public goodwill and a spirit of co-operation on the part of the public authorities and the private interests controlling London's transport services—the London County Council, the municipal tramway authorities and the "Combine" (the Underground Railways and the L.G.O.C.). The Act established a London and Home Counties Traffic Advisory Committee, on which the Home Secretary, the police and various local authorities are represented, and to which, for certain purposes, additional members representing the transport interests and the transport workers may be added. It is the function of this Committee to advise the Minister of Transport on the various problems of London traffic, and it is on their advice that regulations are made under the Act and enforced by the police. The reports of the Committee give details of their many activities.

The London Traffic Act applies to the "London Traffic Area," an area of 1,800 square miles which might, for the present, be called "Greatest London." It comprises, roughly speaking, so much of London and its environs as are within a radius of twenty-five miles of Charing Cross. Amongst the immediate reforms effected in this area under the new powers have been a drastic restriction on the indiscriminate growth of omnibus services and a co-ordination of the times of closing of streets for repairs by the various authorities having statutory powers to break up the roads.

The direction of the police in traffic matters has been assigned since the War to the same branch of



Scotland Yard, under Assistant Commissioner "B," as deals with public carriages. One member of this department deserves special mention, the late Mr. Bassom, Chief Constable, who until his death in 1926 was Director of Traffic Services and may be said to have given his life to the study of London's traffic.

Whatever the traffic authority, its eyes are likely to be the policeman on street duty. Experts can take broad views and initiate experiments, but they must rely on the police to carry them out and report on their working. The traffic department at Scotland Yard collates the results of first-hand observation by the police in the streets, and, working with the Advisory Committee and the Ministry of Transport, is always on the look-out for possible improvements.

For some years past, an annual census of traffic passing nearly 100 selected busy spots has been taken over a period of twelve hours on corresponding days. The results enable the problem to be viewed from the widest possible aspect. Statistics of all accidents are also kept, and the causes carefully analysed. The results are given to the Press for publication, and also to the school authorities, who are thus able to warn the children to avoid those practices which most frequently lead to accidents in the streets.

Two developments of recent years in connection with traffic control are the evolution of a code of standardised signals by hand for the police on traffic duty, and the introduction of automatic signals to replace the policeman. As regards the

former, standardisation of the signals and a general acquaintance with them on the part of the public is facilitated by an illustrated Home Office pamphlet which is circulated to the police throughout the country, to public carriage drivers and motoring associations and papers.

Apart from the question of the relative efficiency of a mechanical signal and the policeman's hand in the regulation of traffic, an economy in police manpower can undoubtedly be made in some cases by use of a signalling device, as, for example, where a considerable stretch of road is under repair and traffic has to be worked in a single line past the obstruction. Normally a constable has to be placed at each end of the obstruction, but the Scotland Yard engineering staff have produced a device which makes it possible for one constable to control both ends from a station midway (or at either end, if more convenient), by means of an electric switch-board operating a signal at each end. Such a device can save the cost of at least three constables in the course of twenty-four hours—£1,000 a year.

It is still regarded as somewhat of an open question how far signalling devices can be usefully employed for the ordinary regulation of crossing streams of traffic. Many types of electric signal with red and green lights have been experimented with in London, including lights attached to a standard or other erection and those which are fastened to the constable's arm or hand. Some devices have even had shoulder straps for the constable to wear, so that lights could be mounted on his back as well as on the front of him. It may be

recalled that it is more than sixty years since the first experiment was made in London\* with an apparatus consisting of semaphore arms coupled with green and red lights, but the illumination was bad, and the experiment, after arousing much favourable comment, ended in an explosion which injured the constable operating it.

There is still plenty of room for further experiment, and one or two provincial cities have already achieved remarkable success in regulating crossings by mechanical signal. One can hardly imagine the vortex of traffic at Hyde Park Corner or in Parliament Square being efficiently controlled by automata or automatic signals, but experience in other cities at home and abroad clearly suggests that there must be many places where London traffic, now thoroughly educated by the London policeman, might well be left, if not to its own, at least to mechanical devices.

\* Outside the Houses of Parliament, in December, 1868.

## Chapter XIII

### THE RECEIVER OF POLICE: METROPOLITAN POLICE FINANCE, PAY AND PENSIONS—POLICE BUILDINGS—WIRELESS, ETC.

#### *The Receiver of Police*

A PROBLEM that faced Peel when he was working out the details of his new police system was how to provide adequately for control of Metropolitan police expenditure and property. The ratepayers and the parish authorities were to have the privilege of paying for the new police, as they had done for the old, but were to have no voice in their management. It was a case of taxation without representation which had to be justified, not merely by the greater efficiency of the new system but by its economy as well.

He decided that Home Office control should be reinforced by entrusting responsibility for all Metropolitan police property and for the administration of the Metropolitan Police Fund, out of which the expenses of the force were to be met, to an independent colleague of the Commissioners, the Receiver\* for the Metropolitan Police District

\* The term "Recciver," as used of a person, is usually associated nowadays with bankruptcy (or stolen property), but the appointment of a treasurer known as Receiver or Receiver-General used to be the regular method of providing that public moneys should be duly received and accounted for. The second function was not always so punctually performed as the first, a circumstance which made some Receiverships among the most attractive of "places."

(usually known as "the Receiver"). A provision to this effect was accordingly included in the measure which became the Metropolitan Police Act of 1829. In seeking the advice of his colleague, Goulburn, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as to a suitable person for the post, he described it as "that on which the whole success of the plan depends,"\* which indicates the importance he attached to an economical administration of the police.

Under the Middlesex and Surrey Justices Act, 1792, a Receiver of the Police Offices (Courts) had been appointed to receive all fees, fines, etc., and to pay salaries. In 1839, the spheres of the Metropolitan police courts and the Metropolitan police were finally differentiated into the judicial and the executive, but financial responsibility for the two was combined, the office of the Receiver for the Courts being amalgamated with that of Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District.†

The Receiver, like the Commissioner and the Assistant Commissioners, holds his office from the Crown. He is appointed by Royal Warrant on the recommendation of the Secretary of State, under whose general directions he acts, and his salary is paid from Voted Moneys. He is a Corporation sole with perpetual succession and he has power to acquire land and property and to sue or be sued in his official name. All Metropolitan police and police

\* The man chosen was Mr. Wray, a barrister who had written a pamphlet on currency questions and was chairman of the University Insurance Society.

† As was also the post of Receiver of the River Police Office, which had been created in 1798 for Dr. Colquhoun, as some recompense for his services in the cause of police reform.

court property is vested in him and all contracts relating to such property or to supplies for these two services are his responsibility. He controls a staff of architects, surveyors, clerks of works and tradesmen for the erection and maintenance of police and police court buildings; of engineers, electricians, fitters, drivers, etc., for the engineering services in connection with heating, lighting, motor-cars, prison vans, motor boats, wireless, electric lanterns, traffic signals, etc.; of storckkeepers, warehousemen, tailors, saddlers, etc., for the clothing and equipment and general supplies of the force. He also manages the Police Printing Office. The Receiver has been described as "the business manager" of the police, which perhaps indicates, in a general way, the scope of his duties. A special function is that of dealing with claims under the Riot (Damages) Act.

The principal function of the Receiver is the administration of the Metropolitan Police Fund from which the expenses of the Metropolitan police courts and police are defrayed. The Metropolitan Police Fund is constituted out of (a) the proceeds of the police rate levied on property in the Metropolitan police district, (b) contributions from the Exchequer, and (c) miscellaneous receipts of comparatively small amount. The Receiver is treasurer of the Fund and all payments into and out of it are made through the medium of accounts kept in his official name at the Bank of England. By the Metropolitan Police Act, 1829, he is required to make out a full account of all moneys received and paid by him, and this account has to be made

up to March 31st in each year and laid before Parliament within thirty days. The accounts of the Police Fund are audited by the Comptroller and Auditor-General who reports thereon to the Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.

*The Cost of the Metropolitan Police : Its Growth  
and Apportionment*

At the end of the eighteenth and the beginning of the nineteenth century, when the old police system was in course of transition to the new, there was for a time an idea that, although the new was to be a system of paid police, it might be made almost to pay for itself. When stipendiary magistrates and police courts were introduced in 1792, it was thought that the cost could be met from various fees, but this never proved to be the case. The elaborate scheme of police reform which Dr. Colquhoun submitted to the Finance Committee of 1798 made provision for all sorts of police licences and fees, so as to produce a revenue which would make the police more or less self-supporting. But the old police system with its deputy constables, watchmen and beadles had gradually become a paid one and the idea that the police should cost little or nothing, or that they might be treated as a revenue department like the Post Office, had been abandoned before 1829. At the same time it was necessary to fix some limit in the matter of cost. The total amount to be provided in any year for the purposes of the Metropolitan police was, therefore, restricted by the Act of 1829 to the amount

of a rate of 8*d.* in the pound on the rateable value of the police district. This remained the limit down to 1868, when it was raised to 9*d.* The subsequent history of the police rate is explained below.

From the beginning the Exchequer made contributions towards the cost of the police by paying the salaries of the Commissioners and the Receiver from the Consolidated Fund, together with the amount previously paid from the same source for the Bow Street foot patrol who had been absorbed in the Metropolitan police in 1829. It had originally been intended that the police rate levied on the parishes in the police district should not be more than 6*d.* in the pound (which was the limit on the old watch rate), and, in 1833, it was reduced to this amount by the Act 3 and 4 Wm. IV cap. 89 sanctioning a grant from the Exchequer to the Police Fund of a sum equivalent to a rate of 2*d.* in the pound, which meant that the Exchequer shouldered a quarter of the general cost of the Metropolitan police. This grant (amounting at first to about £50,000 per annum) shares with the grant for elementary education authorised in the same year the distinction of marking the first round in the struggle between taxpayer and ratepayer. The grant was described, in the preamble to the Act, as "just and expedient," which meant that Parliament recognised that the police service of the Metropolis was more than a local one and that the State ought to bear part of its cost. On the enlargement of the district in 1839, the Police Act of that year provided for payment by the Ex-



chequer of the equivalent of a rate of *2d.* in respect of the new area.

Metropolitan police expenditure slowly mounted as the force grew with the growth of London and new needs arose, but it did not do more than keep pace with the increase in the value of property on which the police rate was levied and, therefore, in the yield of the rate until the fateful explosion at Clerkenwell in 1867. To meet the cost of the large augmentation to the force then made, the limit on the annual sum to be provided for police purposes was raised from *8d.* to *9d.* in the pound on the rateable value of the district, and the Exchequer contribution was increased to the equivalent of a rate of *2½d.*, so as to maintain the division of cost between ratepayer and taxpayer at three-quarters and a quarter respectively. In 1874, under the Police Expenses Act of that year, the Exchequer increased its contributions in aid of police expenditure generally. In the case of the Metropolitan police the contribution was raised to the equivalent of a rate of *4d.*, and from then until 1890, *5d.* from the ratepayers and *4d.* from the Exchequer remained the basis on which the general cost of the Metropolitan police was apportioned.\*

In 1888 the Local Government Act introduced

\* There were certain additional payments from the Exchequer. Down to 1881 the Treasury made contributions in respect of the duties of the mounted and river police, because the Bow Street horse patrol and the river police had originally been a charge on the Exchequer, and after 1881 they bore the cost of the police employed on special services of a national character, besides continuing to pay the salaries of the Commissioner and the Receiver and half those of the Assistant Commissioners.

the system of assigned revenues, in lieu of direct grants in aid of local services. The Exchequer contribution in respect of the Metropolitan police, as well as that for the police of England and Wales,\* was made a charge on the Local Taxation Account to be met out of the tax revenues assigned in relief of the local rates.

Under the Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, a sum of £300,000 per annum was allocated (from the excise duty on beer and spirits), in aid of the new Police Pension Funds established by the Police Act, 1890, and half of this sum was allotted to the Metropolitan Police Pension Fund, £150,000 per annum being roughly the actual cost of Metropolitan police pensions at the time. The grant relieved the London ratepayers for the time of any charge in respect of police pensions and equalised the shares of the ratepayer and the taxpayer in the cost of the force. The former paid a rate of 5*d.* in the pound and the latter made two contributions (charged on the assigned revenues) which together were about equivalent to a rate of the same amount.

This adjustment of the national and local contributions to the cost of the Metropolitan police was, however, to be only a temporary one, because the large augmentation occasioned by the grant of a weekly rest-day to the police and the growth of the pension charge made it necessary, from 1909 onwards, gradually to increase the ratepayer's share

\* In their case the Exchequer had begun to bear a quarter of the cost of pay and clothing in 1856 and had increased its contribution to half the cost in 1874.

by levying a special rate to meet pension expenditure. By 1912 this additional rate for pensions had amounted to 1½*d.* and in the same year the limit on the general rate had to be raised from 9*d.* to 11*d.*, without any increase in the Exchequer contributions which remained as before.

Thus by 1912 the old balance between the national Exchequer and the local ratepayer in the matter of Metropolitan police expenditure had been completely disturbed. Its adjustment and that of the Exchequer contributions to the cost of police generally was one of the problems of national and local taxation which was considered by the departmental Committee appointed in 1911 to examine the proposals made in 1905 by the Royal Commission on Local Taxation. As a result of this Committee's recommendations, the Local Taxation Bill introduced into Parliament in 1914 provided for a Government grant to all police forces in England and Wales of an amount equal to one-half of the total net expenditure for police purposes, including pensions. The Bill could not be proceeded with, owing to the War, but in 1918, when the all-round increase of thirteen shillings a week was granted to the police (at the time of the police strike) it was recognised that it would be impossible to expect the ratepayers to bear the whole of such a large additional charge, amounting in the case of the Metropolitan police to over half a million pounds. Administrative action was accordingly taken, with the sanction of Parliament, to give effect to the 1914 proposals by means of a supplementary Treasury grant which, added to the existing con-

tributions from the assigned revenues, met half the net cost of the police, including pensions.\* It thus became definitely the accepted principle that the cost of the police service should be equally shared between the taxpayer and the local ratepayer. The Metropolitan police, however, receive a special contribution from the Exchequer of £100,000 a year in respect of the imperial and national functions which devolve upon them as the police of the capital. This covers the cost of duties in connection with the protection of the Royal Family and Ministers, State functions, the guarding of Government buildings, the arrangements for regulating traffic and preserving order in the neighbourhood of the Houses of Parliament, etc.

The total net cost of the Metropolitan police, including the cost of pensions, is now (1928-1929) about £7,200,000 a year. This is approximately equivalent to a rate of 2*s.* in the pound on the police district, so that the cost of the Metropolitan police, measured in terms of a rate in the pound, has increased by 200 per cent. in a hundred years. Half the cost is borne by the State and half by the ratepayers, a 1*d.* rate on the police district producing (1928-1929) over £300,000, of which about two-thirds comes from the County of London and one-third from outer London. It is likely that the re-valuations in the latter area, under the Rating and Valuation Act, 1925, will have the not inequitable result of increasing the share of outer London, as well as the yield of a 1*d.* rate.

\* The limit on the police rate had to be raised to 13*d.* in 1918 and it was removed altogether by the Police Act, 1919.

*Police Pay*

About four-fifths of Metropolitan police expenditure is in respect of the pay of the force and the pensions of retired members of it. It is obvious, therefore, that pay is the all-important factor in the cost of a policeman. From 1829 to the Great War a police constable's pay approximated to the wage of an unskilled manual worker, but the constable had also the advantages of permanency, a pension and other privileges. In the course of the seventy years to 1900 his commencing pay improved by only 5s. a week. In the next fourteen years it rose by 6s. and then, in 1918 and 1919, came two jumps, amounting together to an increase of 40s. a week.\* In a hundred years a constable's commencing pay has thus increased by 51s. a week, or about 270 per cent., and 200 per cent. of this increase occurred in 1918-1919. In addition to the large increase in pay, new allowances for rent were granted after the War (a constable receiving up to 15s. 6d. a week and other ranks higher rates), so that, altogether, a police constable has since 1919 been in enjoyment of an average increase of about 150 per cent. over his 1914 rates of pay and allowances. A sergeant's pay goes up to £6 a week (as a station sergeant), an inspector's to £9 13s. a week (as a chief inspector), and a superintendent's to

\* Temporary War allowances amounting in all to 12s. a week (with additional allowances for children) were granted in 1915-1917 to meet the increased cost of living. These were discontinued when the new rates of pay were granted in 1919, but a temporary cost of living bonus was granted again from July, 1920, to October, 1921.

£700 a year. In addition there are free uniform, or a plain clothes allowance, free medical attention, and certain allowances for special duties or to meet out-of-pocket expenses.

The present average cost of a constable, including all allowances, uniform, etc., and the charge for prospective pension, is about £320 a year. A beat patrolled throughout the twenty-four hours and, therefore, needing the continuous services of three constables (which, owing to absences on leave or for sickness, means the time of more than three men), costs about £1,000 a year. Forty years ago (in 1888) it cost about £2,600 per annum to police Piccadilly Circus; it now costs four times this sum (£10,400 per annum), although the number of police employed is the same now as then. Police have become so expensive that every effort must be made to restrict them to essential police duties and to adopt every feasible mechanical or other expedient for saving man-power.

### *Police Pensions*

The generous superannuation privileges which the police enjoy constitute one of the great attractions of the service. Prior, however, to the Police Act, 1890, which was a pension charter for all forces in England and Wales, the policeman's pension was one of the conditions of his service which was on a very unsatisfactory footing. The Metropolitan Police Act, 1829, made no provision for pensions or gratuities, except that it authorised the payment of compensation or allowances to those injured on duty or "worn out by length of service" and to the

widows of those killed on duty. It was soon evident that, if the extraordinary wastage from the force was to be checked and men induced to regard the police service as a career, there must be some definite and general superannuation scheme. Provision was accordingly made in the Metropolitan Police Act, 1839, for the establishment of a Superannuation Fund and for the payment of pensions on a prescribed scale, but it proved an ill-considered scheme.

The intention was that the income of the Superannuation Fund should meet the expenditure on pensions, but there had been no proper actuarial or other inquiry as to what that expenditure was likely to be. When an investigation into the financial aspect of the matter was eventually held in 1862, the Fund having in the meantime become hopelessly insolvent, it was disclosed that the average contribution from the men, which was the main source of income, should have been 2*s.* 9*d.* a week, whereas the 2½ per cent. superannuation deduction from their pay, fixed by the Act of 1839 as the maximum contribution, produced an average of 5*d.* per man only. The insolvency of the Fund that was to result from this lack of forethought was not immediately apparent because during the first thirty years of the force only 14 per cent. of the men qualified for pension. But the income from the men's contributions and other sources, instead of being invested as it accrued, was gradually used up for current expenditure, and the rapidly increasing deficit, as already explained, was met from the Police Fund, a course not actually sanctioned by Parliament till 1857.

Insolvency was partly due to the irregular manner in which the pensions scheme was administered. The Act of 1839 granted a pension absolutely at the age of 60; any earlier retirement on pension was conditional on a medical certificate that the man was suffering from infirmity of mind or body which incapacitated him from further duty. But in practice nearly everyone retired on a medical certificate. Out of the first 2,000 men pensioned only 40, that is 2 per cent., had reached the age of 60, and the average age of retirement was 48, about the same as it is now. The pension scale adopted under the Act of 1839 was on the basis of thirtieths of the pay; a pension of half pay (fifteen-thirtieths) was obtainable, subject to medical certificate, after fifteen years' service, and one of two-thirds after twenty-four years. Although the police service was already known to be a hard one, Parliament had thought in 1839 that the men would be able to hold on until they were 60, like other public servants, but it turned out that 60 was too high a retiring age for the police. A very large number of constables, men in the thirties or early forties, were overcome by infirmity in the sixteenth year of their service when a pension of half-pay was obtainable on a medical certificate. Their infirmity was usually of the kind which has only subjective symptoms. Of those who survived this critical year, hardly any managed to stave off infirmity beyond their twenty-fifth year when they were qualified for the maximum pension of two-thirds pay.

After 1862 administration was tightened up and the scale of pensions made much less generous;



fiftieths were substituted for thirtieths, and the maximum pension became three-fifths of pay, instead of two-thirds, and was obtainable only after thirty-two years' service. This change and the absence of any statutory right to a pension produced great discontent in the force and was one of the causes of the unrest which came to a head in 1872 and again in 1890, as explained in Chapter II. Something was done in 1873 to make the scale more favourable, so that the maximum pension of three-fifths pay could be obtained after twenty-eight years, but it was not until 1890 that a policeman was given the right to a statutory pension and the whole matter put on a new basis.

The general view of those best qualified to judge has always been that about twenty-five years' service is as much as can be expected from a policeman on street duty in all weathers, night and day. In the Police Act, 1890, Parliament accepted the principle that a policeman should be entitled to retire on pension without medical certificate after twenty-five years' approved service. The Act allowed to police authorities a certain discretion as to the scale of pensions, but in the Metropolitan police and most forces the scale adopted was one under which the maximum pension (of two-thirds pay) was obtainable after twenty-six years' service, without any age qualification, and one of a little less than the maximum after twenty-five years. The Police Pensions Act, 1921 (which applies to all who joined after July 1st, 1919, and to any who, although they had joined before that date, chose to accept it in view of certain advantages it offered), extended

from twenty-six years to thirty years the period of service necessary to qualify for the maximum pension of two-thirds pay, and in 1926 the superannuation deduction was increased by statute from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. to 5 per cent. If a policeman is incapacitated by infirmity of body or mind, and has served at least ten years, he is entitled to a pension, and to a gratuity if he has served for a shorter period. Special pensions are granted in cases of injury on duty, however short the service may have been, the rates varying according to the degree of disablement and the length of service, up to full pay as a maximum.

The experience of the Metropolitan police since 1890 has been that about 70 per cent. of the constables retire on pension immediately they have completed twenty-five years' service, their average age of retirement being 47 and their average life as pensioners about twenty years. The average length of service and age of retirement are slightly higher in the case of sergeants and inspectors and very much higher for superintendents.

Under the Police Act, 1890, pensions were granted to widows (with additional allowances for dependent children) only in the case of officers who died as a result of injury on duty. The Police (Pensions) Act, 1918, authorised the grant of a pension to the widow of any man then serving. This scheme was amended and extended by the Act of 1921 and now applies to widows of men who die after retiring on pension as well as to the widows of men who die in the force after at least five years' service.

The cost of police pensions is a painful subject for the taxpayer and ratepayer and it is unnecessary to dwell on it at length ; but it may be pointed out that pensions are the dead-weight of police finance and that the only certainty about the date when the pension charge will reach its maximum is that it is far in the future. At present (1929) the cost of Metropolitan police pensions is about £1,300,000 per annum, and between a fifth and a sixth of the total cost of the force is accounted for by this non-effective charge : more than seven-eighths of it has accumulated in the past forty years and it grows by about £80,000 a year. Before 1919 a constable's pension was £65 a year ; it is now £165.

The payment and administration of pensions granted from the Metropolitan Police Fund is one of the functions of the Receiver. Pensions are paid quarterly in advance to ex-members of the force, and of these there are nearly 13,000 on the registers, the numbers being increased annually by grants of some 700 or 800 new pensions, an increase which is offset by about 400 deaths. Pensions to widows are paid weekly and at present number about 1,000.

A pension may be forfeited or temporarily withdrawn by the police authority for various kinds of misconduct, or it may be applied for the benefit of a pensioner's family, if he neglects to maintain them. Except in the case of such forces as maintain a reserve of police pensioners, a practice which has never been adopted in the Metropolitan police, a police pensioner is not liable to be recalled to active service unless his pension is a temporary one granted

on disablement from which he recovers. On several occasions in the past, however, Metropolitan police pensioners have been temporarily re-enlisted in the force at times of special pressure, such as the Coronations of King Edward VII and King George V, but the need for such temporary reinforcements is now largely met in London by the Special Constabulary Reserve. During the Great War between 2,000 and 3,000 Metropolitan police pensioners came back to take the places of serving police officers who had joined the Forces.

Although, as has just been stated, a police pensioner is, generally speaking, not liable to be recalled for active service, the saying "Once a policeman always a policeman" has a good deal of truth at the bottom of it, and a pensioner still remains, so to speak, one of the family after he has ceased to be an active member of the force. The domestic aspect is, from another point of view, a familiar one in the administration of police pensions. Many pensioners and their wives look upon the Receiver's Office, not only as the place from which pensions are paid, but also as a Court of Domestic Relations, and in most cases the tact born of experience makes it possible to settle these domestic storms in a way agreeable to both parties and creditable to all concerned.

### *Police Buildings*

It is not possible to do more than touch briefly on the other branches of the Receiver's administration,\* those in which he acts as Controller of

\* See chart of organisation, page 97.

Buildings and Supplies for the Metropolitan police and police court services.

As regards buildings, there are some 200 or so police stations in the Metropolitan police district, residential quarters have been provided for rather more than a quarter of the force (for 1,200 married and 4,000 single policemen), and there are various buildings for special purposes. The three main purposes served by police buildings are those of (a) administrative offices, (b) residential quarters, and (c) places for the temporary confinement of prisoners. The three are usually combined in one building or group of buildings. In many cases a police station is within the same curtilage as, or next door to a police court, an arrangement which is common throughout the country and has many practical advantages, as the work of police courts and police is complementary, although the two are separate and independent branches of the public service. Where a police court and a police station have been built side by side in London, as, for example, the South-Western Court and the police station in Lavender Hill, the former has usually been given a more dignified elevation than the latter with a view to indicating the difference between a police magistrate and a policeman.\*

Under the old police system the last of the three purposes mentioned was practically the only one for which any accommodation was provided. The watch house was usually the lock-up and *vice versa*, and in 1829 the police property which was transferred from the parochial authorities to the

\* See page 32.

new establishment consisted of a collection of old watch houses\* and lock-ups, with a few watch boxes where a watchman could shelter. The modern police station has gradually evolved from the watch house. The first step in 1829 was to establish a number of "station houses." Private houses were rented to serve as the local headquarters and also as apartment houses (known as "section houses") in which practically all the men of a section and their families were lodged, it being considered essential at the start to keep the men together off as well as on duty. Gradually the married men were allowed to find their own quarters and the section houses were confined to single men.

It was many years before anything was done in the way of building police stations. Private houses continued to be converted to police purposes, and such stations as were erected in the first fifty years were usually rather mean and incommodious structures of the cheapest yellow brick. A basement was as much a *sine qua non* as in any other mid-Victorian dwelling, so that in remote country stations, on hill-tops of Surrey or Essex no less than in Kentish Town or Walworth, the policeman off duty led a cave man's life, retiring underground for meals and recreation. He liked it because in a basement he was withdrawn from observation by his superiors and he had all the fresh air he wanted on duty.

\* One of the old parish watch houses taken over in 1829 still stands in Denmark Street, Whitechapel, and is in the possession of the Receiver, although not in use for police purposes.

A new era in Metropolitan police buildings commenced in 1880, when Sir William Harcourt took the matter in hand and instituted the necessary financial and other measures to replace the inadequate and rather insanitary yellow police station of the old days with more convenient and comfortable red brick buildings. Since then continuous endeavours have been made to improve the outside as well as the inside of a police station—to make it such that the police can live and work in comfort and nobody feel ashamed of living next door to a blue lamp. Examples of modern police stations are those of Hyde Park, Harrow Road, Hampstead, Richmond, Southall, Norbury, East Ham and Barking.

Police stations vary very much according to whether they are town, suburban or semi-rural stations. The modern tendency is to have as few stations as possible and to make the station the centre of a system of police telephone boxes, which is somewhat of a reversion to the watch box system of the old days. The telephone box enables the station to keep in touch with the police on duty in each district and *vice versa*, while the public can use it to ring up a station and obtain information or summon police assistance as readily as they can that of the fire brigade.

A large town police station will usually be a composite building comprising offices, cells for prisoners, a section house where the unmarried men reside and two or more sets of married quarters for the station officers. Most of the business of the station is transacted in the inspector's office, which

usually has a waiting-room adjoining and a "charge room" opening out of it. Persons arrested and brought to the station are dealt with in the charge room from which there is direct access to the cells, male and female prisoners being accommodated off separate wings or corridors. At the back of the station there will usually be a large yard and a parade room or parade shed where the men are paraded and inspected before they go on duty. At those stations where the inspection and testing of public carriages are carried out, the station yard will provide the necessary space for this purpose and in it will be the local public-carriage office. The other administrative accommodation in a station includes rooms for the C.I.D., a matron's room, a police surgeon's room, a "meal room" for the men to use in their half-hour refreshment interval, a writing room, etc. Classrooms for the instruction of young constables and for lectures are also provided at some stations. If a station is the head station of a division it will contain offices for the superintendent, the chief inspector and the sub-divisional inspector; if it is only a sub-divisional station, there is an office for the sub-divisional inspector.

All the large stations possess a detention room as well as a number of cells. The detention room, which was first instituted about 20 years ago, is less prison-like than a cell and is used for the detention of persons whom it is unnecessary or undesirable to confine in a cell. The most remarkable change which has taken place in connection with police stations in recent years is the great



falling off in the number of persons requiring accommodation in the cells—a result of the decline in drunk and disorderly charges and the widely extended use of bail.

A section house for single men comprises mess-room, billiard-room, library, cubicles or bedrooms, bathrooms, drying-rooms, a canteen, etc. Married quarters are usually in the form of a flat with sitting-room, kitchen-scutlery (where the cooking is done by gas), a bathroom, etc., and two or three bedrooms, with a small balcony. In recent years, as already explained, several large blocks of these police flats have been built in inner London.

There are many special buildings throughout the police district for ancillary purposes which are not peculiar to the police, such as the motor-car and motor-boat workshops at Barnes and Wapping, the garage at Lambeth, etc. There are stables for the horses of the mounted branch at many stations and the Mounted Branch training establishment at Imber Court, Thames Ditton, consists of blocks of stables, riding school, married quarters, etc.

The clothing and other stores of the Metropolitan police are accommodated in the new building at Lambeth. The police, it should be mentioned, are officially supplied only with outer garments, that is uniform and equipment. Underclothing and other necessities, such as safety razors, tooth-brushes, towels, etc., are not issued to them, as they are to the Army. The cloth for police uniforms is purchased by the Receiver and the uniforms, as well as other articles of equipment, are made by contractors, each article being in-

dividually fitted under the supervision of the Receiver's technical staff. The stock of uniforms, etc., kept in the Store is for issue to recruits and for exchange. Speaking generally, articles of police uniform are renewed by periodical issue in accordance with the requirements of the Secretary of State's regulations, which specify the various articles to be provided by the police authority, the period of wear and the number each man is to have in his possession. A considerable number of garments are, however, renewable only as and when they are worn out and not after any specific period.

*Motor Transport—Lanterns—Wireless, etc.*

The engineering or mechanical side of the Metropolitan police service is one that has developed rapidly since the War. It is curious to note that in his speech to the House of Commons on April 15th, 1829, Peel referred to "the increasing mechanical ingenuity of the age" as one of the circumstances of the time which called for a new and more efficient system of police. It might be thought that a vision of the motor-car had inspired him, but in 1829 it was the railway era that was beginning and Peel was presumably impressing on his hearers that the new means of locomotion would be available to criminals as well as to the rest of the population. After a hundred years, although we have not yet begun to speak of "mechanised police," the police service has no greater need than that of keeping in touch with the latest advances in mechanical ingenuity, not only to defeat the criminal but to enable police

work to be carried out as efficiently and economically as possible.

The fleet of Metropolitan police motor vehicles numbers over 250 and is constantly increasing. There are also between 30 and 40 police motor-launches and boats on the Thames. Chief constables, superintendents, chief inspectors, divisional detective-inspectors, sub-divisional inspectors and the public carriage inspectors have motor-cars, and there are cars or vans for various purposes. A great deal has been heard of the "fast cars" of Scotland Yard, in connection with the Flying Squad and otherwise, but, in fact, although the police have cars that can go fast when necessary, as, for example, in an occasional chase after the much advertised "motor bandit," very high speed is not the first consideration in either the motor-cars or the motor-boats of the police, and there is no car so fast that it is known as "*the* fast car." Endurance is rather the quality required because police cars receive very heavy usage. Policemen are usually an "out-size," which makes it difficult to meet their needs with baby cars, but, for economical and other reasons, all police vehicles, including prison vans, are of as light a type as possible.

Police launches once had a rather bad reputation for the amount of wash they caused, but this was when they were hired for the day, and, as the Home Secretary has had occasion publicly to announce, the police are not "water hogs" any more than they are road hogs, nor are they called upon, as in *The Sign of Four*, to be able "to catch anything on the river." The aim of those who are in charge

of the police river-craft is to have a well-built hull, small draught and an engine that can make reasonable headway against the tide in the shallows as well as the deeps—for the police boat must be capable of going everywhere.

Police lanterns are not what they were. The old "bull's eye," like the old watchman's lanthorn, illuminated the policeman rather than the naughty world, but it had endeared itself to the force as well as the public. By wearing it inside his great-coat the night patrol could keep himself warm, almost to the point of internal combustion, and, it may be added, to the great detriment of his uniform. The oil lamp was replaced some years ago by an electric lantern which can give eight hours' continuous light, throws a very strong beam and can be employed, if necessary, to signal to traffic by means of a detachable red disc. Eight thousand electric lanterns are now in nightly use by the Metropolitan police, the necessary charging and distribution of the accumulators for them being done from a central station at Scotland Yard.

The most recent developments in the application of mechanical ingenuity to police needs are those in connection with wireless, police telephone boxes\* and automatic traffic signals, all of which have already been referred to in this or in other chapters. The value of wireless for police purposes is still the subject of experiment, but it has been in everyday

\* The first section of London's new system of police telephone boxes was put into operation in December, 1929. When the whole scheme is complete there will be a network of hundreds of boxes around London. The telephone box system was first experimented with in London in 1888 and Fixed Point Boxes were adopted a few years later.

use at Scotland Yard for some years. There is a central wireless station at headquarters, capable of transmitting over long distances ; it is in use throughout the twenty-four hours for sending and receiving communications from the Flying Squad cars as they move about the district. The organisation of any general system of police wireless through the country is still in the future, but a great many of the difficulties encountered in the early days of police wireless have been overcome, and the results of the Scotland Yard experiments are available for other police forces. At first telephony was used, but telegraphy has since been adopted, because it is speedier and more reliable and has a greater range. Police wireless communications are sent and received in code, which besides ensuring secrecy is found to be on the average considerably faster than telegraphy *en clair*. As a general means of communication for police purposes, wireless cannot be regarded as either a substitute for or an improvement on the telephone : it can be profitably used only when the telephone is not available, or when the circumstances are such that it affords a readier, quicker and more secret means of communication.

Broadcasting facilities have been made available to the police by the B.B.C., as everyone knows, and it will probably not be long before the familiar opening "We are asked by the Commissioner of Police to broadcast the following," will sometimes be varied for listeners and seers-in to "We are asked by the Commissioner of Police to broadcast this photograph." Then indeed will it be the turn of the criminal classes to send out an S.O.S.

## Chapter XIV

### POLICE AND PUBLIC

POPULARITY is not, as a rule, what we look for in the public servant, nor is it a measure of his efficiency. A hint of disparagement and even of dislike is, as often as not, intended to be conveyed by the use of the term "an official." It is significant that in England the police have escaped being classed as officials; a constable may be spoken of as "a police officer" but he is never called "a police official." There is a constant cry for fewer officials, but in the case of the police the general demand is for more. No one ever thinks of the police as a "horde" or an "incubus," and our nicknames for them have little or nothing of malice.

A popular handbook on the French police\* recently published in Paris concludes with a chapter on the causes of their unpopularity, and the writer begins by propounding, as an axiom, that "There is no human institution which inspires so much mistrust and enmity as the police." This may exaggerate the traditional antipathy of police and public in France, but it is no exaggeration to say that almost the reverse is true of the police in England. There is no body of "public servants" who, on the whole, have more deserved that name or gained so large a measure of public trust and affection.

\* Ce qu'il faut connaître de la Police et de ses mystères. Léon Ameline, Boivin & Cie., Paris.

The credit for this amity between public and police may belong more to the public than to the police. There is, fortunately, a general recognition in this country of the fact that a policeman is a citizen acting on behalf of his fellow citizens and, therefore, entitled to all the support they can give him. But there was little recognition of this before 1829. The first Commissioners of Police gave expression to what were, to a large extent, new ideals\* of public service and a new conception of the relations of police and public when they instructed their constables that they must be civil and attentive to persons of every rank and class, that insolence or incivility could not be passed over, that no qualification was more essential to policemen than a perfect command of temper, and that if they did their duty with quiet determination, interfering only when necessary, they would be sure to receive the assistance of all well-disposed persons. These are still the principles on which police duty must be carried out if the popularity of the police in England is to be maintained, and, it may be added, the primary object for which the police exist remains what the Commissioners proclaimed it to be in 1829—the prevention of crime. “The absence of crime will be considered the best proof of the complete efficiency of the police”: these are words taken from the original instructions to the Metropolitan

\* They were not entirely new because the Fieldings and their disciple, Saunders Welch, had attempted to imbue the parish constables of their day with the highest ideals of public service. Welch’s “Observations upon the Office of Constable,” published in 1754, breathe the same spirit as the instructions to the new police in 1829.

police and they give expression to what must always be the test of success for every police force.

The Metropolitan police, in common with other forces, have had their ups and downs in popular estimation. There have been various reasons of time and circumstance for these fluctuations in the general goodwill towards the police, but it may be said that, whatever the cause of occasional tension or friction, it has seldom, if ever, been the result of any general lack of confidence in police efficiency. This, however, is not to say that there have not been constant complaints of the insufficient protection afforded by the police.

“ ‘Where’s the pelisse?’ ” cried Mrs. Gamp, meaning the constabulary. “ ‘If they greased their whiskers less and minded the duties which they’re paid so heavy for a little more, no one needn’t be drove mad by scrouding so.’ ” Mrs. Gamp’s feelings are shared by everyone who fails to find a policeman just when he wants one. Police are like doctors, ambulances and hospitals: we like to keep away from them but to have them instantly available if need arises, and many of those who think that the police are never about when they are wanted are ready enough at other times to denounce them as interfering busy-bodies.

Those in authority over the police have the difficult task of reconciling what may be called Mrs. Gamp’s point of view with the principle, already stated and always heartily endorsed by the public, that prevention and not punishment is the object, and that, therefore, a policeman’s efficiency must not be judged by his activity in the matter of arrests



or summonses. It has long been the rule in all forces that promotion is in no way dependent on the number of "cases" to a constable's credit, and no amount of prosecuting zeal can make up for failure to pass the examination tests for promotion.\*

Excess of zeal is not, however, the trouble which gives sleepless nights to those in charge of the police. Of police work more than any other calling is it true that "They also serve who only stand and wait." A constable may often be tempted to adopt this as his motto in all circumstances, especially if he has lost his chances of promotion and reflects on the troubles and inconveniences that activity on duty may bring him. But he is paid to do something more than survive the boredom of the beat: the detective who never detects any crime, and the constable who leaves all the police court work to his comrades is no use as a policeman and is a fraud on the public.

A great deal is heard at times of corruption in the police, but if there have been strained relations between police and public, they have not been due to any general lack of confidence in the integrity of the police. It is not surprising that among the 120,000 men who have passed through the Metropolitan force and have been the guardians of London since 1829 there should have been more

\* One of the features of the centenary celebrations of the Paris Municipal police (March, 1929) was the bestowal of the Cross of the Legion of Honour on a policeman who had made over 1,000 arrests. In England we would think that the less said about it the better.

than a few to whom Juvenal's "*Quis custodiet ipsos custodes?*" has, unfortunately, been applicable; but, taking the police as a body, this question is one that there has been little occasion to ask—singularly little if one considers the temptations to which policemen are exposed and how poorly they were paid in the past.

The police have never escaped and are never likely to escape charges of taking bribes or levying illicit tribute, but they are rarely made in relation to their duties for the protection of the public and the prevention or detection of crime (in the generally accepted meaning of "crime"). They arise mostly in connection with street betting, street-walkers and enforcement of the restrictions on the sale of intoxicating liquor. The Royal Commission of 1906-1908 made special inquiry into allegations of bribery of the Metropolitan police under the first two heads and their conclusions were that both occurred, but that cases of taking money from prostitutes were very infrequent, and that there was no widespread and systematic bribery of either kind. The Macmillan Committee on Street Offences (1928) and the Lec Commission (1929) have come to much the same conclusions as regards corruption in the police. The facts with regard to night clubs which were exposed in the Goddard case (1929) related to a very special sphere of police duty, and perhaps the most remarkable thing about this extraordinary case was, so to speak, the practical monopoly of corruption, in a singularly fruitful field for it, by one officer who was able to secure for himself a sum more than sufficient to bribe a whole division.

Those who believe in the existence of wholesale corruption among the police perhaps forget that a corrupt police argues a corrupt community. A police force is a section of the community with the usual human failings and a great deal more than the usual allowance of temptations. Of no public servant can it be more truly said that he is what the public makes him. If the police take bribes, it is usually because they are offered them. Even where this is not so and the evil is rather that certain classes engaged in illicit occupations, or subject to supervision or licensing by the police, are exposed to blackmail by unprincipled members of the force, it is not easy for the police authorities to stamp it out unless they have the fullest support and assistance from the public. One of the difficulties confronting the authorities is that those who have knowledge of incidents or practices discreditable to the force, or reflecting on its honour, will not bring themselves to report the facts immediately to headquarters but content themselves with telling others about it, which only proclaims the evil without in any way remedying it. On the other hand, it is incumbent on the authorities not to pursue an ostrich-like policy about matters which are the subject of general rumour. Under the old rates of pay the temptation to take money may at times have been irresistible to the policeman who found it impossible on his small wage to make both ends meet, but there can be no such excuse now and anyone who tips a policeman is doing a disservice to the police as well as the public.

But efficiency and integrity are not enough.

Any want of public goodwill towards the police has not usually been the consequence of mistrust on either score: it has been rather the reflection of a feeling that something was amiss between two friends, that interests which ought to be identical were tending to diverge. On the eve of their centenary the Metropolitan police unfortunately found themselves passing through what was perhaps the most disturbed period in their relations with the public that they have known. Whatever might be thought of the justice of the criticisms levelled against the police or of the incidents out of which they arose, it was undeniably very remarkable that in the years 1926-1928 it was necessary to have so many inquiries into Metropolitan police matters. An impression has got abroad that all these inquiries have been in the nature of investigations into police misconduct. This is an utterly false view of the matter: they have been mostly concerned with questions of policy and procedure and as to the desirability of altering the law. But it cannot be overlooked that underlying them all has been something in the nature of a general questioning of police methods and an idea that the relations of police and public are not as cordial as they used to be. If what appeared to be disturbing the public mind could have been crystallised into a question, it would probably have taken some such form as, "Are the police forsaking their proper sphere and is a new spirit of arrogance and interference on their part arousing antagonism on the part of the public?"

Anyone who thinks that the answer to this

question should be in the affirmative, and who attributes the blame for any recent impairment in the friendly relations of police and public to the motor-car, can point to illuminating statistics as to the extent to which the police have been affected by the motor-car.

The number of summonses issued at the instance of the Metropolitan police in 1927 was approximately 105,000, as compared with about 30,000 in 1913. Nearly the whole of this increase is in respect of motor-car summonses, of which there were about 78,000 in 1927.\* The number of constables employed in regulating traffic has been constantly increasing and has more than doubled since the War. The old conception of a policeman as the man who holds up the traffic has become charged with a new meaning for the public and also, it should be remembered, with a more deadly significance for the policeman. Metropolitan policemen are knocked down and injured by motor vehicles to the number of about one every other day. The police take this risk as all in the day's work, although possibly it may make them when on point duty a little "short" with those who over-run their signal or put a foot on the accelerator instead of the brake. Motorists are a class to which the police themselves belong in large and increasing numbers and there is certainly no feeling against motorists on the part of the police.

\* In 1928 there was a decrease to about 72,000, in consequence of the new policy instituted in the middle of 1928 as regards issuing a caution, instead of taking out a summons, in minor cases where the offence is a first one. It should be emphasised that the police have no sort of financial interest in motor-car penalties; they are paid not to the Police Fund, but to the Road Fund.

The statistics as to summonses for motor offences and as to traffic constables suggest however that the police must now be very much occupied in detecting and prosecuting breaches of the regulations with regard to speed, number plates, silencers, etc., and it is often alleged that they are being diverted from more important duties to deal with motor-car offences and to regulate traffic. But it is necessary to preserve a sense of proportion in the matter. The number of constables on traffic duties in London is even now only one-eighth of those employed in the streets, and 70,000 or 80,000 motor-car summonses represent an annual average of 7 or 8 cases per constable, or about 1 case per every 100 of the inhabitants of Greater London. As a large proportion of the cases concern persons who do not live in London, the effect of the large number of motor-car prosecutions on the relations between the London police and the London public must be even more thinly spread.

It is also worth emphasising that motor traffic has had the effect of increasing the benevolent side of police activities. The rôle of the policeman as the kind man who sees people safely across the road has developed into a regular arrangement under which about a thousand policemen in London are employed four times a day, for half an hour or so at a time, in securing the safe passage of children going to or leaving school.

Such employment may be a waste of police time, but it is a saving of children's lives, and the view that the police in dealing with motorists and traffic are forsaking their proper sphere is perhaps

that of the man in the car rather than the man in the street. The appropriateness of the policeman's employment to "keep the street" has been referred to in Chapter XII, and it may be recalled that it was the dangers of the road that gave birth to the modern policeman, in the form of the Bow Street patrols, to give security against highwaymen and footpads. If the policeman thus began by protecting our great-great-grandfathers from being held up, is he not continuing in the same line of usefulness by saving us from being knocked down, and is it more his business to protect our property against thieves than our lives and limbs against the unskilled, the careless or the reckless motorist?

The growth of motor-car summonses and of traffic duties, together with the fact that the police now spend a large part of their time writing reports about street accidents, do certainly indicate a change in police duty, but it has been accompanied by a falling off in other work which has, so far, enabled the new duties of the post-War period to be undertaken with hardly any addition to the force, notwithstanding the unceasing growth of London and its population. This is most strikingly shown in the figures as to arrests. In the ten years, 1905-1914, arrests by the Metropolitan police were on the average over 120,000 a year; since the War they have declined from 81,000 (1920) to 58,500 (1928). The number of arrests is not an infallible index either of the amount of crime or of the degree of police efficiency, but arrests are equally with summonses a measure, though by no means a

complete measure, of the amount of work of certain kinds that the police have had to do.

It is a fact that the Metropolitan police are arresting fewer people to-day than they were a hundred years ago, although there are now six times as many policemen and four times as many people within their jurisdiction. Down to 1889, that is to say, for the first sixty years after the force was established, the number of arrests showed no periodical growth and surprisingly little variation over a term of years, only twice (in 1878 and 1879) exceeding 80,000 in a year. A marked increase showed itself after 1895, and rapidly accelerated until after the South African War a peak of 127,000 arrests was reached in 1905; there was a decline for the next five or six years, but the numbers rose again to 133,000 in 1913, and then fell rapidly in the years of the Great War.

The broad explanation of these figures as to arrests by the Metropolitan police is the general improvement as regards crime and disorderly conduct. Since 1829 there has been, on the whole, a continuous decline in the amount of serious crime and disorder in proportion to population. The increase in arrests between 1895 and 1914 was a temporary phase which can be very largely accounted for by arrests for "simple drunkenness" (being found drunk in a highway or other public place), and the miscellaneous offences committed when drunk which come under the head of "drunkenness with aggravation." In 1913 arrests for these offences, in proportion to population, were practically double what they were between 1884 and



1895. The explanation of the drop in arrests since the War, which has meant a great falling off in work for the police, the running of "Black Marias" half-empty, and unoccupied cells at police stations, is similarly to be found in the change that has come over the scene in the matter of drink. The arrests for offences of drunkenness have since the War been less than half what they were in the ten years before the War. One striking result of this diminution of drunkenness is that the number of Metropolitan police injured in effecting arrests is now only about a fifth of what it was thirty years ago.

But it is not only the general increase in the sobriety of the public that has made a difference to how the policeman spends his time. There are other branches of police duty in which there has been a decrease in recent years, as, for example, that relating to the offence of working an unfit horse in the street. If it were possible accurately to measure the new work taken on against the old which has dropped off, it would very likely be found that there has not been very much variation in the total volume in, say, the last twenty years.

The police are still, as they have been throughout their history, concerned chiefly with the maintenance of order and the prevention, detection and prosecution of offences. The catalogue of offences with which they have to deal has, however, been constantly changing and growing. The "new crime" of recent years, and we may call it "crime," as the offences with which the police are concerned are all technically crimes, has risen in the world and got among the respectable classes, and the

police have in consequence had to intrude there also. This, perhaps, is nobody's fault, but it is certainly not the fault of the police. In other countries, as for instance, Germany, in proportion as the volume of regulations governing the daily lives and occupations of the community increased, the police became more and more the agents of the State for enforcing them: in London it has been rather the other way. In the first years of the new police they were found so surprisingly reliable and useful, in the absence of local authorities with competent staffs, that there was a tendency to make use of them in every sphere where regulation or restriction was required, but as the municipal side of the public service developed, the police in London gradually ceased to be inspectors of nuisances, common lodging houses and dangerous structures. Latterly, perhaps, the policeman everywhere (though less in London than elsewhere), is being loaded up with miscellaneous duties which make him "the handyman of civil life," or, to put it another way, more the official and less the policeman that once was. This is perhaps inevitable, and it is anyhow consistent with the root idea of the policeman as "the community man," concerned with the general good rule and government of the community, but it has certain consequences.

The new work for the police which has brought them new contacts with the public does not consist solely of motor-car misdoings, although these are numerous enough, about a hundred new offences having been brought into being by the motor-car.

The police find themselves concerned with many other disregards of restraints or requirements under laws and regulations which do not so much repress lawlessness as create new forms of it—lawlessness which is of the letter rather than the spirit. These acts of commission or omission, for which the police have to be on the watch and prosecute, are breaches of the law that, speaking generally, do not offend against the moral code nor arouse any indignation in the well-disposed citizen; on the contrary, they are probably things which he has himself done, or is very likely to do, and in which he can see no harm. In dealing with them the policeman cannot count on the same support from the community that he received when he was more exclusively occupied with drunkards or in protecting the honest and peaceful from the thief or hooligan. If the police thus lose touch with the goodwill and support of the community, they are sure to come in for charges of high-handedness, arrogance and unnecessary interference, although they may be merely enforcing regulations in the making of which they have little or no voice.

It has been suggested that the wide powers given by the Defence of the Realm Regulations during the War have made the police more inclined to ride roughshod over private rights and liberties. The War period was certainly one when new offences were created almost daily under the Defence of the Realm Acts and on the police, to a large extent, fell the duty of having their neighbours punished for breaches of this new and kaleidoscopic code. This perhaps had a ruffling effect on the friendliness between police and public, but it can only have

been a temporary phase, and the police have been little involved in the post-War unpopularity of "Dora." The majority of the officers who are likely to have been concerned with "Dora" during the War have since retired, and there is no reason why their successors should have acquired new and oppressive methods. Whether they have in any degree done so, or whether any new tradition has arisen, were among the questions investigated by the Royal Commission of 1928-29 on police powers and procedure, and they have found that there is little support for the charge that the police generally are more arbitrary and oppressive than before the War.

There is one change of recent years which cannot but have some bearing on the relations of police and public in the future. The creation of the Metropolitan police in 1829 marked the definite establishment of "professionalism" in the police system, in the sense that the whole-time paid policeman took the place of the watchman, who was as often as not a parish pauper, and of the amateur constable who gave his services as a matter of civic duty more or less imperfectly performed. Now, a hundred years later, the police have become, or are in process of becoming "professional" in another sense. Their new rates of pay and allowances (which have made the commencing salary and emoluments of a policeman the equivalent of £200 a year), have placed them more on a level with what used to be called the "blackcoated" professions.

In the second chapter reference has been made to the attempts to introduce something in the nature of Trade Union organisation into the police. In

1919 they were given, in the Police Federation and its Branch Boards and Executive Committees, forms of corporate expression and representation more akin to those of a profession. They have taken full advantage of these and through them have shown an altogether new sense of professional unity. Policemen now possess not only such *esprit de corps* as discipline or pride in the force or a common occupation and common dangers may create, but also that fostered by their new representative institutions and their new opportunities for conference and combined action, and also, it may be added, by the uniformity in conditions of service which has been established since the War. The police of England and Wales have been knit together in new bonds of unity. This change benefits the public as well as the police. It is all to the good that the police should take a corporate interest in their calling, their well-being and their efficiency, and police authorities and the heads of police forces have welcomed and heartily co-operated in this development. But, in joining together for the advancement or defence of their own interests, the police have to steer clear of any suggestion that they have sectional interests which may conflict with those of the public at large. Some of the professions have been described as conspiracies against the public. Nothing could be more disastrous than that the police should come under suspicion of being professional in that sense. The tradition on which the modern police system has been carried on for a century is that the police are the public and the public the police ; of this tradition the public and the police must be joint trustees.

## Appendix I

*The Gutteridge murder case of 1927-28 has been generally regarded as one of the most difficult and successful criminal investigations in the history of Scotland Yard. An account of the inquiry is here given, by way of supplement to the chapters on the detective police, as an illustration of the C.I.D. of to-day at work.*

### THE GUTTERIDGE MURDER

AN inquiry into a murder is not a common type of criminal investigation and the majority of detective officers are never called upon to take part in one, but the murder of P.C. Gutteridge on September 27th, 1927, for which two men, Browne and Kennedy, were executed on May 31st, 1928, may be selected as an example of many aspects of criminal investigation. It shows the wide range which an inquiry may take, the innumerable interrogations, and the mass of information that has to be patiently collected, sifted and recorded, success being finally achieved by a combination of courage, perseverance and hard work, chance, science and the indispensable informant. The case was also one of team work between different police forces and various branches and divisions of the Metropolitan police, and it illustrates the extent to which the police can count upon the co-operation of the public and the Press.

P.C. Gutteridge was a village constable in Essex who had been on night patrol and had made a point with another constable at 3.30 a.m. He was subsequently found, about 6 a.m., lying dead by the roadside not far from the point. The first steps in the investigation were taken by the local police. It was ascertained that the dead man had received two shots in the head at close range, and that, after he had fallen, a shot had been fired at each eye. There were no signs of any struggle, but his whistle was hanging loose, his pencil grasped in his hand and his notebook lying near. One of the bullets fired through his eyes was discovered imbedded in the ground. Another bullet which had been fired through his cheek and had been caught in his clothing fell out when the body was moved. These bullets might well prove valuable evidence, but there was nothing in the circumstances of the crime that threw light on how or why the constable had been shot, except that he had apparently used his whistle and had been about to take down some particulars, probably in regard to a motor-car.

The Chief Constable of Essex at once decided that it was a case in which he ought to have the assistance of Scotland Yard. This course was more than usually desirable, because the crime had been committed not very far from the boundary of the Metropolitan Police district and it was at least likely that the murderers had come from London or would go there. His telephoned request to the Commissioner of Police was met by the immediate despatch in a motor-car of a Chief Inspector and

a detective-sergeant from the Central Office at Scotland Yard, and early the same afternoon they took up the case in co-operation with the Essex detectives.

The usual methodical examination was made of the scene of the crime and of the dead body and a series of measurements and photographs were taken. The tar macadam surface of the road showed no decipherable marks, but there were signs of a motor-car having collided with a grass bank and there was a scratched stone. Before they began their investigation the C.I.D. officers had already received information that a doctor's car had been stolen the previous night at the village of Billericay, some twelve miles away, and a theory of the crime which at once suggested itself was that those who had stolen this car had been challenged by the constable and had murdered him. It might have been the use of his whistle as they passed him that caused them to stop for fear that there might be another policeman ahead, but no ordinary motor-car thieves would resort to such a brutal murder to escape being detected in the theft of a car. Until information definitely connecting the stolen car with the murder was forthcoming this theory could be regarded as only a provisional one, and inquiry had to be made as to other persons and events that might have something to do with the crime.

A detective officer has usually to collect his information by interrogating third parties who volunteer to make statements or who are asked for them, because they are thought to have knowledge



of some circumstance that may be relevant, and, if the information seems of any possible importance, it has to be recorded in the form of a signed and witnessed statement. No one can be compelled by the police to answer questions, but there is a readiness to assist the police and volunteer information which is sometimes embarrassing in its profusion. In the Gutteridge case, before the inquiry was finished more than a thousand persons had been interviewed; the bulk of the information was irrelevant or worthless but over two hundred voluntary statements were taken.

Local suspicions were plentiful in the case, and in regard to one somewhat eccentric individual so strong and persistent that the Chief Inspector, though satisfied in his own mind that they were baseless, felt compelled discreetly to investigate his movements and alleged possession of firearms, a process which involved a three and a half hours' interview in an out-of-the-way barn. All the recent circumstances and contacts of the dead constable's life were also carefully inquired into; this necessitated the detectives picking their way slowly through the mazes of local gossip, and interrogating some of the murdered man's neighbours. There were many other local inquiries into such matters as recent purchases of firearms and movements of suspicious individuals who had been on the tramp, and a considerable time was spent in following up, in the neighbourhood, one old criminal who had been reported by an informant to have admitted some connection with the murder. He had had in fact nothing to do with

it but was found to be wanted for another crime, for which, in due course, he was sent to three years' penal servitude.

Bogus confessions by notoriety hunters or persons of unbalanced mind are common in murder cases, and one was soon forthcoming in this. While the C.I.D. officers were still pursuing their inquiries at Romford (the local headquarters of the Essex police), late the first evening, a telephone message came from the Hampshire police that a man had given himself up for the crime at Basingstoke. As his story was reported to be a credible one, the officers set off at once in their car for Basingstoke, and one of the most remarkable achievements in the case was this cross country journey of sixty miles through a night of the thickest fog. After a preliminary examination of the prisoner (at 5 a.m.) he was brought to Romford, as he wished to make his full statement there. Later the same day, however, he was found to be an epileptic who had a short time previously given himself up in another sensational case (the trunk murder of 1927), and he was released.

In the meantime other information and discoveries were accumulating. On the day after the crime a revolver was found by a boy on the foreshore of the Thames at Hammersmith, and next day a tin box of cartridges was picked up on a waste piece of ground not far away. These were submitted to a gun expert who was able (by means to be presently explained) to certify that they had no connection with each other and that the revolver did not fit the bullets found at the scene of the crime.

The tin box bore a decipherable finger impression. The first step with a view to identifying this, was to take the finger impressions of all persons who were known to have handled the box. It was found that the impression on the box had not been made by any of them, and it was then compared in the Finger Print Bureau with the recorded finger prints of about 20,000 motor-car thieves, burglars, housebreakers, etc., a search which was discontinued when evidence was forthcoming that the box had been where it was found for some days before the murder.

Concurrently with all these inquiries other resources of the Criminal Record Office were being drawn upon, in the hope of arriving at the author or authors of the crime by what may be called the *à priori* method. Criminals at liberty whose previous achievements and known proclivities suggested that they might possibly have been concerned in this crime were looked up and their whereabouts on the night in question inquired into. This is a procedure, almost invariably resorted to in similar cases, which helps to make criminal investigation less like looking for a needle in a haystack than it would otherwise be. One ex-convict on this list of possibles was missing from his registered address and had left behind him a collection of newspaper reports of the crime and a bloodstained bandage. Special inquiry was in consequence made for him through the *Police Gazette*, and his photograph (as that of a man who was missing), was also circulated in the daily Press, with the result that he eventually appeared at Scotland Yard and cleared himself of all suspicion.

Turning to discoveries which were to prove of real importance, the post-mortem examination resulted in finding in the dead man's head the bullet fired through his other eye, and in observation of the marks of black powder on his face. The Assistant Commissioner at Scotland Yard recognised the significance of these black powder marks as showing that the cartridge used must have been of a long obsolete pattern. Most important of all was the discovery of the car stolen on the night of the murder from the doctor's house at Billericay. The theft had been reported to the local police, as soon as it was discovered in the morning, and a description of the car was at once circulated to all police stations in Essex and London, and appeared in the *Police Gazette* later in the day. The same evening the attention of the Brixton police was called to a car which had been standing since early morning in a passage-way there, and, on being taken to the police station, it was found to answer to the description of the stolen car. An immediate house-to-house inquiry was made in Brixton but did not produce any useful information as to when or by whom the car had been left in the passage-way. Under one of the seats, however, was found what the Solicitor-General, in his opening speech at the subsequent trial of Browne and Kennedy, described as "a small clue but one on which was imprinted the most cogent and conclusive evidence—an empty cartridge case." Dark spots that might be bloodstains were also observed on the offside running board; it was accordingly detached and sent to a Home Office analyst who by chemical

examination verified that they were bloodstains. (The running board is now in the "Black Museum" at Scotland Yard.) On both the near wheels of the car some earth was observed which was compared with and found to be similar to the soil of the grass bank at the scene of the crime: dried grass was also found adhering to the wheels, suggesting that they had run into such a bank, and there were other signs of the car having hit something. The car was examined by a finger-print expert from Scotland Yard and finger impressions on the steering wheel were developed and photographed but they afforded no clue. Search was then made for finger prints on the doors of the garage at Billericay, whence the car had been stolen, but equally without result.

The cartridge case, the bloodstains and the other observed details all tended to make it certain that this car, which was duly identified by the doctor as his, had been involved in the crime. Photographs of the car and particulars of articles missing from it, including the doctor's attaché case with surgical instruments and dressings, were at once circulated in the *Police Gazette* and were also given the widest publicity in the newspapers. The Scotland Yard officers and the local police also proceeded to comb Billericay and its neighbourhood for information that might throw light on the theft of the car. Every shop in the village was visited, inquiries made at the railway stations and many statements taken. These were tasks in which the local police assisted with the utmost zeal, and they could not have been carried out in such a comprehensive

manner without their help. A surprising number of the local inhabitants had seen suspicious characters on the evening of September 26th: some of them were invited to Scotland Yard to inspect the photograph albums in the Criminal Record Office, in the hope that an identification might result, but, although the movements of several "might have beens" were investigated, the albums were finally drawn blank.

The inquiries at Billericay did, however, result in definite information being obtained as to the stealing of the doctor's car. A neighbour had heard it being started up at about 2.30 a.m. and then driven away down a back road. This gave some indication of the route followed; the next problem was to get the car to the scene of the crime and thence to Brixton with a mileage which would tally with that recorded on the speedometer (which had been checked with the doctor's records), and by the earliest time at which the crime could have been committed. The Scotland Yard officers tackled this by visiting between five hundred and six hundred houses scattered over the countryside, and in the end some fifteen people were found, in farms or cottages along quiet lanes, who had seen or heard a car travelling at a high speed in the early hours of the morning of September 27th, and their statements enabled the officers to draw out (with almost complete accuracy, as subsequently appeared) the circuitous route which had been followed, presumably in order to avoid observation by the police on main roads. Similar inquiries on the London side of the crime produced another

eight persons who had heard or seen what was probably the same car, but nothing definite could be learnt as to who was in it, although many statements on the point had to be investigated.

There were now very strong reasons for connecting the stolen car with the murder, but this reconstruction of the car's journey was one of the many results laboriously achieved which, in the event, formed no part of the case against the murderers, because it proved possible to rely on other and more conclusive proofs.

The publicity given to the case and the appeals made by the Press that anyone in possession of information should come forward and give it in confidence kept up a steady flow of would-be informants who thought they had clues, and produced hundreds of letters from all classes of the public and all parts of the world. Possible lines of inquiry that any of these suggested were followed up but, in spite of all efforts, the case came to a standstill, so far as getting any definite clue to the identity of the murderer or murderers, and when the adjourned inquest was held at the end of November, the verdict was murder against some person or persons unknown. All that could be said to have been established by the police so far, was a chain of circumstantial evidence showing that the murder had been committed by someone who had stolen the Billericay doctor's car and was in possession of very obsolete ammunition.

But the Chief Inspector in charge of the case, from his experience of motor-car criminals and from information available in the Criminal Record

Office, had already formed the opinion that a criminal named Frederick Guy Browne had had a hand in the crime. This opinion was based not only on Browne's previous record, but because the way in which the stolen car had been driven along narrow country lanes at high speed in the dark showed that the driver must have had an intimate knowledge of these byeways, such as Browne was likely to have possessed, as he was known to have had a motor-car business for a time in the neighbourhood.

The police had so far failed to trace this man Browne, but, with the recklessness that characterises criminals, he was taking steps to bring himself to their notice, by continuing to engage in crime. The train of events which were to lead to his actual arrest was started, far from the scene of the murder, by one of those trivial incidents which have so often placed the noose round a murderer's neck. One day in the middle of November a motor-van in the streets of Sheffield was forced against a wall in trying to avoid collision with a passing car driven in a reckless fashion. The van driver took the car's number and reported the matter to the nearest constable, with the result that the car was found and stopped, and later on a summons taken out against the driver for dangerous driving. This was sent to the Metropolitan police for service at the London address shown on the licence produced to the Sheffield police, but the address proved to be false and the licence somebody else's. The matter was, however, not allowed to drop. After patient inquiries by the Sheffield police (which involved working out the life histories and



transformations of two or three cars, by means of their log books, engine numbers and registration particulars), it was eventually discovered, with the aid of an informant, that the driver who was being searched for was Frederick Guy Browne, that he had sold in Sheffield a car stolen from a house at Tooting, and that he was carrying on a garage business at Battersea.

In the meantime Scotland Yard was once more on the trail. At the end of December, it received from Sheffield a letter, the writer of which offered to give information about recent "hold ups" at railway stations, and finished up with the remark that, if the police got the two men concerned in the hold ups, it was "a thousand to one" that they had the right men for the Gutteridge murder. Inquiries were made of the Sheffield police as to who the writer was, and the Sheffield police were able to tell Scotland Yard all about him, because he had been seated beside Browne when Browne's car collided with the van, and he was the informant who had enabled the Sheffield police to identify Browne as the driver of the car and to obtain information about him which was now passed on to Scotland Yard. This man had met Browne as a convict in Dartmoor, but he was now carrying on a legitimate business in Sheffield, and it was, apparently, the desire to rid himself of the unwelcome friendship of a desperado, combined with the hope of a reward, that led him to communicate with Scotland Yard. He eventually received the reward of £2,000 offered by the *News of the World*.

The inquiries which followed on the collision in November had brought home to Browne, as already mentioned, the theft of a car in Tooting, and he was, in consequence, the subject of inquiries by the local detectives of the "L" and "W" divisions of the Metropolitan police. His garage at Battersea was in "L" division; in "W" division was the house at Tooting from which he had stolen the car. Browne, it so happened, had gone away for a few days to Dartmoor to meet a convict on his release, and the local officers had planned to arrest him for the theft of the car immediately he returned. As it was known that he was a dangerous criminal with a bad name for reckless use of firearms, special precautions had to be taken. It was arranged that a number of police should conceal themselves in the office of his garage on the evening of his expected return. Browne drove his car into the garage yard at 7.30 p.m. on January 20th, 1928, and unsuspecting passed into his office; he was at once pounced upon and secured before he had time to avail himself of the armoury of revolvers he was subsequently found to possess. With one of them, he explained, he had intended to dispatch five police officers and himself, on any attempt being made to arrest him.

His car was searched and in it was found a Webley revolver fully loaded. Further search resulted in the police discovering in the car and the garage and on Browne himself a number of surgical instruments and appliances. These the Billericay doctor next day declared to be his property and to have been in his car when it was stolen—one of the

many instances of the way in which criminals take pains to preserve, instead of getting rid of evidence of their complicity in a crime.

Browne was taken on arrest to Tooting police station, to be charged with the theft of the Tooting motor-car, and later the same night, on his arrest being notified to Scotland Yard, he was interviewed by the Chief Inspector in charge of the murder inquiry. After the usual caution, he was asked to account for his movements on the night of September 26th-27th, and, with some hesitation, elected to make a statement, in which he denied all knowledge of the murder. On the night in question he was, he said, at home in London with his wife, and he gave explanations of how he came to be in possession of the loaded revolver found in his car and of the surgical instruments.

His statement did nothing to lessen the suspicion that he was the murderer or one of the murderers of Gutteridge. His possession of the surgical instruments and of revolvers, coupled with what was already known about him, all pointed that way, but still it was only suspicion. Fortunately, by his theft of the Tooting motor-car, Browne had provided the police with another charge which could be proceeded with while further evidence on which to accuse him of the murder was being obtained.

Immediately after interrogating Browne the Chief Inspector proceeded to Sheffield, interviewed the writer of the letter already mentioned, and, having satisfied himself that the information this man had to give was of the utmost importance, invited him to Scotland Yard. He came a day or two later

and made a long statement showing that after the Gutteridge murder he had associated with Browne and a garage assistant of Browne's known as "Pat," and had learnt enough from their talk to make him certain that they were the murderers. A garage assistant who had recently left him had been mentioned by Browne in his statement, and the informant was able, from a photograph in the Criminal Record Office, to identify this "Pat" as an ex-convict named Kennedy. Kennedy was traced to rooms in Wandsworth which he was found to have left in a hurry. With the help of the landlady, a taxi-driver and railway officials, he was followed to Liverpool, and there Scotland Yard and Liverpool detectives set a watch for him. By a ruse he was induced late at night to leave the house in which he was hiding, and, as he was trying to make off, he was challenged by a courageous Liverpool detective, Sergeant Mattinson (who has since been awarded the King's Police Medal). Kennedy at once drew a revolver, pressed it against the detective's ribs and fired, but fortunately he had forgotten to release the safety catch.

Kennedy was then brought up to Scotland Yard, accompanied by his wife, and was charged with being concerned with Browne in the theft of the Tooting motor-car. He was then asked, like Browne, to account for his movements on the night of the murder. After consulting his wife, who advised him that his best course was to tell the truth, he made a very long statement admitting that he and Browne had stolen the doctor's car from Billericay and had met P.C. Gutteridge; but he declared that

his share in the murder was merely that of an unwilling accessory : all the shots, he said, were fired by Browne ; he, Kennedy, had only reloaded the revolver, as they drove away.

The details of Kennedy's statement as to the movements of Browne and himself on the night of the murder were made the subject of the closest inquiry and were largely verified. For example, Kennedy related how Browne and he had first attempted to steal a car from a garage of another house and had been compelled to desist by the barking of a dog. When the house was visited it was found that no dog had ever been kept, but it was eventually elicited that a strange dog was in the habit every night of visiting a dustbin beside the garage, and this dog must have been the one which had barked.

Browne and Kennedy were jointly charged at the South-Western police court with the theft of the Tooting motor-car, and were remanded on this charge, but, as soon as the progress of the inquiries justified it, the charge of murder was substituted. During the police court proceedings Kennedy's solicitor represented, on Kennedy's instructions, that the statement made by him at Scotland Yard had been " pumped out " of him, when in a state of distress and hunger, by threats, etc. In fact, Kennedy had been provided with all that he could possibly want in the way of meals and rest, and the magistrate was satisfied that it was an entirely voluntary statement made under no pressure of any sort. Later, at the trial at the Central Criminal Court, the police were entirely vindicated, because

Kennedy declined to go into the witness box on the ground that the statement completely and fairly represented his defence.

Kennedy's statement was no evidence against Browne, whose part in the murder still remained to be established. Conclusive proof was afforded by the cartridge case found in the stolen car at Brixton on the day after the crime and the revolver found in Browne's car when he was arrested. The cartridge case and the revolver were submitted to War Office small arms experts, and also to the gun expert by whom the Hammersmith revolver and cartridges had been examined, and they were able, from microscopical examination, to say that the empty cartridge case had been fired in the revolver in question and could have been fired in no other. The War Office experts also testified that the cartridges found in the revolver included the obsolete Mark I and Mark III patterns, which had not been made for thirty and twenty-five years respectively, and that one of the Mark I cartridges was loaded with cordite and the other with black powder. The two bullets found at the scene of the crime were both Mark I pattern; one had been fired by a charge of cordite and the other by a charge of black powder, while the peppering on the dead constable's face was such as must have been made either by black powder or cordite.

The revolver evidence against Browne was similar to that which led to the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti in America in 1927 and of the murderers of the Sirdar, Sir Lee Stack, in Cairo in 1924. It is in the nature of a new discovery in connection with

revolvers and amounts to something like a science of revolver prints. Briefly, it is now recognised that every time a revolver is fired, the breech shield, against which the cartridge recoils, impresses itself on the cartridge, and each breech shield makes an impression unlike that of any other breech shield. This is due to the fact that, in the manufacture of a revolver, the breech shield is finished by hand with a file, and no two workmen or files can make absolutely identical marks; when, therefore, the marks on a breech shield and a cartridge case are photographed and microscopically examined and enlarged their individual character and correspondence is unmistakable. In the case of Browne's revolver the breech shield had unusually distinctive marks, because he had made indentations in it through using a metal cleaning rod, and these indentations and the other marks on the breech shield were faithfully reproduced on the cartridge case.

This expert evidence was not subjected to any cross-examination for the defence and was accepted by the Judge and jury at the trial as indisputable. Browne endeavoured to escape the effect of it by trying to go back on his original admission, in the statement made by him on the night of his arrest, that he had had the revolver since April, but this effort was unsuccessful. It was his possession of this revolver and the finding of the cartridge to match it in the doctor's motor-car that drove home the case against Browne, and made vain all his attempts to account for possession of the doctor's instruments and to establish an alibi by calling his wife to say that he was at home on the night of

the murder. Kennedy was convicted mainly on the admissions in the statement he made at Scotland Yard after his arrest.

In dismissing the appeals made by Browne and Kennedy to the Court of Criminal Appeal, the Lord Chief Justice said that their guilt was "as plain as a pikestaff." Emphasis has been laid upon the part played by scientific evidence in achieving this result, but science would have been of no avail, had it not been for the persistence and courage of the police and their readiness to take advantage of openings given them by the two criminals. Browne and Kennedy acted with reckless folly not only in disclosing their secret to a third party who turned informer, but in continuing in a career of crime which was bound to bring them up against the police sooner or later. This recklessness is partly to be explained by the fact that they counted upon being able to shoot any police officer who tried to arrest them: it was almost by a miracle that the Liverpool detective escaped being shot dead by Kennedy, and, if Browne had been come upon suddenly, or without the most careful preparations being made to surprise him, sudden death might well have overtaken several of the officers concerned.



## Appendix II

### *A List of the Commissioners of Police of the Metropolis, Assistant Commissioners, Deputy Assistant Commissioners, and Chief Constables of the Metropolitan Police and also of the Receivers for the Metropolitan Police District, 1829 to 1929.*

#### COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE OF THE METROPOLIS

\*Colonel Sir Charles Rowan, K.C.B. July 7th, 1829—January 5th, 1850.

\*Sir Richard Mayne, K.C.B. July 7th, 1829—December 26th, 1868.

\*†Captain William Hay, C.B. January 6th, 1850—August 29th, 1855.

Colonel D. W. P. Labalmondière, C.B., Acting Commissioner. December 30th, 1868—February 12th, 1869.

Colonel Sir Edmund Henderson, K.C.B., R.E. February 13th, 1869—March 26th, 1886.

General Sir Charles Warren, G.C.M.G., K.C.B., R.E., F.R.S. March 29th, 1886—December 1st, 1888.

James Monro, Esq., C.B. December 3rd, 1888—June 21st, 1890.

Colonel Sir Edward Bradford, Bt., G.C.B., G.C.V.O., K.C.S.I. June 23rd, 1890—March 4th, 1903.

Sir Edward Henry, Bt., G.C.V.O., K.C.B., C.S.I. March 5th, 1903—September 2nd, 1918.

General the Rt. Hon. Sir Nevil Macready, Bt., G.C.M.G., K.C.B. September 3rd, 1918—April 14th, 1920.

Brigadier-General Sir William Horwood, G.B.E., K.C.B., D.S.O. April 20th, 1920—November 7th, 1928.

General Rt. Hon. the Viscount Byng of Vimy, G.C.B., G.C.M.G., M.V.O., LL.D. November 8th, 1928—

#### ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE

‡Colonel D. W. P. Labalmondière, C.B. March 3rd, 1856—December 1st, 1884.

\* Sir Charles Rowan and Sir Richard Mayne were Joint Commissioners 1829-1850, and Sir Richard Mayne and Captain Hay 1850-1855.

† Inspecting Superintendent from September, 1839—January, 1850.

‡ Inspecting Superintendent from April 15th, 1850, to March 2nd, 1856.

- \*Captain W. C. Harris, C.B. March 3rd, 1856—June 30th, 1881.  
 C. E. Howard Vincent, Esq. (afterwards Sir Howard Vincent, K.C.M.G., C.B., M.P.), Director of Criminal Investigation. March 6th, 1878—June 14th, 1884.  
 Colonel R. L. O. Pearson, C.B. July 1st, 1881—May 30th, 1890.  
 James Monro, Esq., C.B. (afterwards Commissioner). July 8th, 1884—August 31st, 1888.  
 Sir Alexander C. Bruce. December 11th, 1884—March 31st, 1914.  
 Robert Anderson, Esq., C.B., LL.D. (afterwards Sir Robert Anderson, K.C.B., LL.D.). September 1st, 1888—May 30th, 1901.  
 Sir Charles Howard, C.B. June 23rd, 1890—September 29th, 1902.  
 E. R. Henry, Esq., C.S.I. (afterwards Commissioner). May 31st, 1901—March 4th, 1903.  
 †Major Sir E. F. Wodehouse, K.C.B., K.C.V.O. September 30th, 1902—October 31st, 1918.  
 Sir Melville L. Macnaghten, C.B. March 19th, 1903—June 12th, 1913.  
 F. S. Bullock, Esq., C.I.E. December 1st, 1909—January 12th, 1914.  
 Sir Basil Thomson, K.C.B. June 23rd, 1913—November 30th, 1921.  
 The Hon. Sir Trevor Bigham, K.B.E., C.B. January 29th, 1914—  
 F. L. D. Elliott, Esq., C.B. April 1st, 1914—  
 Brigadier-General W. T. F. Horwood, C.B., D.S.O. (afterwards Commissioner). November 1st, 1918—April 19th, 1920.  
 Sir James Olive, K.B.E. April 21st, 1920—December 31st, 1925.  
 Major-General Sir Wyndham Childs, K.C.M.G., K.B.E., C.B. December 5th, 1921—December 5th, 1928.  
 Rear-Admiral Sir Charles Royds, K.B.E., C.M.G. January 1st, 1926—  
 Norman Kendal, Esq., C.B.E. December 6th, 1928—

## DEPUTY ASSISTANT COMMISSIONERS OF POLICE

- Norman Kendal, Esq., C.B.E. (afterwards Assistant Commissioner). November 18th, 1918—December 5th, 1928.  
 Lieut.-Colonel P. R. Laurie, C.B.E., D.S.O. February 15th, 1919—

\* Chief Constable of Hampshire, 1843-1856.

† Previously Assistant Commissioner, City of London Police, 1890-1902.

Lieut.-Colonel J. F. C. Carter, C.B.E. October 24th, 1922—  
H. G. F. Archer, Esq., O.B.E. December 6th, 1928—

## CHIEF CONSTABLES

Captain Henry Baynes. February 25th, 1869—May 1st, 1881.  
A. C. Howard, Esq. (afterwards Assistant Commissioner).  
February 25th, 1869—June 22nd, 1890.

Lieut.-Colonel R. L. O. Pearson (afterwards Assistant Commissioner). February 25th, 1869—June 30th, 1881.

\*Robert Walker, Esq. February 25th, 1869—March 6th, 1886.

§A. F. Williamson, Esq. July 8th, 1886—December 9th, 1889.

Colonel W. A. Roberts. July 15th, 1886—October 28th, 1895.

Major W. E. Gilbert. August 18th, 1886—December 31st, 1906.

Colonel Bolton Monsell. August 18th, 1886—February 28th, 1910.

¶Captain A. C. Knollys. June 26th, 1890—September 24th, 1890.

¶Captain G. H. Dean. October 6th, 1890—August 8th, 1910.

§Melville L. Macnaghten, Esq. (afterwards Assistant Commissioner).  
December 16th, 1890—March 18th, 1903.

F. S. Bullock, Esq., C.I.E. (afterwards Assistant Commissioner).  
March 17th, 1903—November 30th, 1909.

Major E. H. T. Parsons, C.B.E. October 14th, 1903—October 31st, 1918.

†Colonel A. H. M. Edwards, C.B., M.V.O. November 2nd, 1906—November 14th, 1912.

§The Hon. F. T. Bigham (afterwards Assistant Commissioner).  
December 4th, 1909—January 28th, 1914.

Major E. M. Lafone. March 1st, 1910—April 30th, 1926.

G. L. Craik, Esq. (now Sir G. L. Craik, Bt.). November 17th, 1910—October 1st, 1914.

†Major S. W. Douglas, D.S.O. December 17th, 1910—December 7th, 1914.

Major M. H. Tomlin, O.B.E. December 5th, 1912—

James Olive, Esq., C.B.E. (afterwards Assistant Commissioner).  
October 1st, 1918—April 20th, 1920.

\* Previously Chief Superintendent.

† Afterwards Chief Constable of the Lothians.

‡ Afterwards Major-General Sir A. H. M. Edwards, K.B.E., C.B., M.V.O., Commandant-General Rhodesian Forces, 1912-1923.

§ Chief Constable, C.I.D.

¶ Previously Assistant Chief Constable, from June 15th, 1887.

NOTE.—From February 25th, 1869, to October 22nd, 1886, the Chief Constables were known as District Superintendents.

- Brigadier-General W. T. F. Horwood, D.S.O. (afterwards Assistant Commissioner and Commissioner). October 28th, 1918—October 31st, 1918.
- H. D. Morgan, Esq., O.B.E. March 16th, 1919—
- James Billings, Esq., O.B.E. April 27th, 1920—September 30th, 1927.
- †A. E. Bassom, Esq., O.B.E. December 3rd, 1923—January 17th, 1926.
- \*F. P. Wensley, Esq., O.B.E. December 1st, 1924—July 31st, 1929.
- T. J. Landon, Esq. May 1st, 1926—
- Brigadier J. Whitehead, C.M.G., D.S.O. October 1st, 1927—
- \*J. H. Ashley, Esq. August 1st, 1929—

#### RECEIVERS FOR THE METROPOLITAN POLICE DISTRICT

- John Wray, Esq. July 7th, 1829—April 30th, 1860.
- Maurice Drummond, Esq., C.B. May 1st, 1860—August 31st, 1883.
- Sir Richard Pennefather, C.B. September 1st, 1883—December 31st, 1909.
- George Henry Tripp, Esq., C.B. January 1st, 1910—December 31st, 1918.
- J. F. Moylan, Esq., C.B., C.B.E. January 1st, 1919—

\* Chief Constable, C.I.D.

† Director of Traffic services with rank of Chief Constable



## GENERAL INDEX

- "A" division 89, 90
- Accidents, street 246, 247, 288
- Aliens, control of 116, 117, 187
- Ambulances, motor and hand 114
- American police 67, 197
- Archbishop of Canterbury, and  
Lost Property Office 119
- Armlet, worn by police 143
- Army, appointment of Army  
officers to police 29, 31, 39,  
43, 46, 48, 55, 128, 129, 211 ;  
soldiers in police 32, 48, 211 ;  
discipline in Army and police  
compared 145-148
- Arrests by Metropolitan police,  
statistics as to 288-290
- Assaults on police 290
- Assistant Commissioners, "A"  
(administration), his functions  
97, 110, 111 ; "B" (traffic  
and public carriages) 228, 250 ;  
"C" (of C.I.D.) 165 ; "L"  
(Civil Business) 115-118
- Assize of Arms, constable first  
mentioned in connection  
with 3
- Austrian police 95, 127
  
- Bail 135-136, 274
- Beats, measurement of 80 ;  
police on beat duty 87 ;  
patrol of 137
- Beggars 239
- Berlin, police in 59, 95, 167, 196  
(see also under *Prussian police*)
  
- Bertillon system of identification  
191-192
- Betting and gaming, duties of  
police in connection with 118
- "Big Four," popular name for  
Area Superintendents (C.I.D.)  
171
- Birmingham, Commissioner of  
Police for 31 ; police school  
at 103
- Black Maria 139, 290
- "Black Monday" 44, 47
- Blankets, Peel and 72
- Blood money 23
- "Bloody Sunday" 47
- "Blue Army," name given to  
new police 38
- Blue lamp, of a police station 272
- Boats, police 208, 276-277
- "Bobby" 28, 42, 244
- Bombs 162, 185-186
- Boots, police 142
- Bow Street, new "plan of  
police" at Bow Street public  
office 12 ; the runners 13-14,  
23, 149-151, 154 ; Dickens  
and the runners 154 ; horse  
and foot patrols 14-15, 210
- "Brown Bear, The," a flash  
house, headquarters of Bow  
Street police 27
- Buckingham Palace, and Trafal-  
gar Square riots 44
- Buildings, vested in Receiver  
269, 270 ; stations and quar-  
ters 270-273 ; special 274

Burglary, an uncommon offence  
177; distinguished from  
housebreaking 177

"C" division 91

Candidates for police 97-105

"Cabby" 244

Cabs, in London 229-230

Canteens 141

Cass, Miss, case of 46, 71

Catholic Emancipation and  
police reform 27

Central Office (C.I.D.), its  
duties 166, 167; and special-  
isation 168; and provincial  
police 168, 169; Flying Squad  
attached to 170

Central Canteen Committee—  
functions of 141

"Charleys," origin and end of 2

Chartist riots 35, 59

Chief Constables (originally dis-  
trict superintendents) 39, 45,  
125; position and number  
125-129; duties 128-129;  
of C.I.D. 166, 171

Chief Inspectors 133; in C.I.D.  
166, 168

Chief Medical Officer—his func-  
tions 112, 113

Children, police and 287

C.I.D., formation of 95; organ-  
isation 165-174; and pro-  
vincial police 169; recruiting  
for 172, 173; pay 173, 174;  
the general nature of its  
work 174-178; and wireless  
179; photography 180;  
Royal Commission (1928-  
1929), preface and 181-184;

(see also under *Central Office*,  
*Crime Index*, *Criminal Record*  
*Office*, *Finger Prints*, *Flying*  
*Squad*, *Convict Supervision*,  
*Special Branch*)

City of London police 8-9, 31

Civil Business, a department of,  
created 95; its province 115-  
118 (see also *Assistant Com-  
missioner "L"*)

Civil service, police as a branch  
of 121 (see also *Preface*)

Civil servants, at Scotland Yard  
96, 118, 121-122

Civil servants, their relationship  
to police 121-122

Clerkenwell explosion 38, its  
effect on growth of Metro-  
politan police 81; on detective  
branch 155

Clothing and equipment of  
police 142-145, 274-275

Clubs, police and 117-118 (see  
also *Night Clubs*)

Coldbathfield riots 34, 37

Commissioner of Police, first  
proposals as to appointment  
of 17, 18, 20; created under  
Metropolitan Police Act 28;  
appointment of 29, 30; note  
as to the name 31; the two  
first Commissioners, 30-35; a  
sole Commissioner appointed  
36; wounded in Hyde Park  
riots 38; relations with Home  
Secretary 47, 48, 49, 72-74;  
qualifications required in 55-  
56

Commissions, Royal (1855) 37;  
(1908) 52; (1928-1929) 180-  
184 (see also *Preface*)

- Commons, House of and Westminster constables 10; magistrates 16; and Metropolitan police 39, 41, 46, 68-74
- Complaints, against police, how dealt with 108, 109
- Constable, office of 3; early history of 4-8, 11-16; declaration of 3, 6
- Constable, uniformed, normal duty of 137
- Constabularies, Borough, placed under Watch Committees 61; and Home Office 65
- Convalescent Home, for police at Hove 114
- Convict Supervision Office, formation of 190, 203
- Corruption in police 282-284 (see also *Preface*)
- Cost of police 256-261
- County Police Act (1839) 63
- Courts, Police establishment of as "Police offices" 18-19; employment of police at 138, 139; of superior elevation to police stations 270 (see also under *Chief Magistrate*)
- Crime, meaning of for C.I.D. purposes 174-175; analysis of crime in London 176-178; decline in 289; the "new crime" 290 (see also *Preface*)
- Court Justice, the 12
- Criminal Record Office, a registry of crimes 188; identification of old offenders 189-191; convict supervision office 190, 203, 204; photography 191; Bertillon anthropometric system 191; finger print system 192, 193; Crime Index 198-201; publications, *Police Gazette*, etc. 201-204
- Crime Index, a new method of identification 198; indexing of crimes, 199; used by other forces 200
- D'Angely, Mme., case of 52
- Defaulters 107-108
- Defence of the Realm Acts and police 292, 293
- Dental surgeons 113
- Deputy Assistant Commissioner 96; of C.I.D. 166, 171; in charge of Mounted Branch 211
- Desborough Committee 54; nationalisation of police considered by 63
- Despatch cars 132
- Detective police, early form of 7; beginning of in Bow Street runners 14; formation of detective branch 40, 95, 155; prejudice against detectives as spies 151-154, 156-157; observation by 156; scandal in 157; C.I.D. formed 158; relations with uniformed police 157-159; gentlemen detectives 159; Titley case and *agents provocateurs* 160-161; Fenian troubles 161-162; Jack the Ripper 162; change in public opinion towards 163-164; objections to plain-clothes police 152, 163; central and local organisation 165-174; specialisation in 167-168 (see also under *C.I.D.*)



- Detention rooms 273  
 Director of Public Prosecutions, and C.I.D. 167, 181  
 Directory, pocket, carried by police 144  
 Discipline, Police code of 105; authorities empowered to deal with offences against 106; Discipline Board 106, 107; appeals 106; improvement in 107; drunkenness 107, 108; complaints against police 108, 109; criminal charges against 109; police and military compared 145-148  
 Discharged Prisoners' Aid Association 203  
 Distribution of police, in proportion to population 85-86; in Metropolitan police district 86-90  
 District, the Metropolitan Police 36, 75-79; enlargement of 62  
 District Superintendents, appointment of 39 (see *Chief Constables*)  
 Divisions, of the Metropolitan police 77-79, 88-92.  
 Divisional clerks 131  
 Divisional surgeons, duties of 113  
 Dockyards, police employed at 81, 217, 218  
 Drunkenness, amongst police 107, 108; arrests for 289, 290  
 Dublin Metropolitan Police 19  
 "Duty Hints," a policeman's *vade mecum* 104, 144, 145  
 Duty, hours or tours of 41, 86-87  
 "E" division 89, 91  
 Education, standard of in police recruits 100-105  
 Electric lanterns 277  
 Engineer, the police (see *Chart*, 97) 275  
 Engineering services 170, 275-278  
 Evening police, Bow Street patrols as 15  
 Exchequer contributions to cost of police 257-261  
 Exhibition, the Great 243  
 Fast cars 276  
 Fenians 38, 82, 161-162  
 Finance, Pitt's Finance Committee and police reform 20, 256; financial control of Metropolitan police 47, 65, 253-256; pensions and 268; growth of police expenditure 256-261; pay all-important factor 262; national and local contributions 257-261  
 Finger-prints 179, 192-197, 300, 302  
 Fire Brigade, separate from police in London 115  
 Fires, duties of police in connection with 115  
 Fixed points 40, 86, 246  
 Fixed point boxes 137, 277  
 "Flag Days" 118  
 Flash houses 27, 151  
 Flying Squad, employed for miscellaneous purposes 168; its organisation 169; its duties 170; use of wireless by 170, 278; its moral effect on

- criminals 170; activities confined to London 171  
 French police 17, 29, 61, 62, 64, 157-159, 170, 181, 184, 279 (see also under *Paris police*)  
 Furious driving 241, 246-247  
 Gaolers 138  
 Garrotting 37  
*Gazette, the Police* 201-203; 300-302  
 General limits, under Metropolitan Streets Act (1867) 245  
 General Orders 73, 105  
 Gin, cheapness of 26  
 Gin Act 13  
 Goddard case 110, 283  
 Good Daniel, Murder by 153  
 Gordon Riots 15, 16, 27  
 Greece, British police methods introduced in 35  
 Guards, The, employed in support of police at Queen Caroline's funeral 24, 25; Life Guards acquire the name of "Piccadilly butchers" 25; called out on occasion of police strike 51  
 Gutteridge, murder of, C.I.D. called in 168; account of inquiry into (Appendix)  
 "H" division (Whitechapel) 90  
 Habitual criminals 37, 40, 189-191  
 Handcuffs 144  
 Helmets, adoption of, for police 38, 142  
 High constable, office of, 4, 6, 12, 23-24  
 Highwaymen, preventive measures against 15  
 Home Office, the 17, 27, 46, 47, 58, 60, 63-65, 72, 74, 122, 150, 160, 179, 190, 253  
 Home Secretary, to have general control of police 27, 28; as police authority 58, 73; control of police generally 63, 65, 68, 70-72; and Commissioner of police 72-74  
 Horse patrol, Bow Street 14-15, 210  
 Horses, police 210-212  
 Housebreaking 177-178  
 House of Commons (see *Commons, House of*)  
*Hue and Cry, The* 201, 202  
 Hundred, the 3, 6  
 Hyde Park, riots in 36-38; police stationed in 213, 214; arrests in 215; duties of police in 215, 216  
 Indian police service 49, 51, 56  
 Identification of criminals 188-200  
 Information 178, 180, 184, 297-298  
 "Informations" 111, 201  
 Informers 14, 23, 151, 156, 178, 184  
 Imber Court 212, 274 (see also *Mounted Police*)  
 Injuries on duty 240, 290  
 Inspectors of Constabulary 63, 128  
 Inspectors, uniformed 133-134; C.I.D. 166, 168, 172  
 Instruction Book, the 104 (see also *Preface*)

- Ireland, Peel's police under Peace Preservation Act, 1814 (first to be called "Peelers") 25, 30
- Italy, police organisation in 58, 64
- "Jack the Ripper" 48, 162
- "Justice shops" 11
- Justices of the Peace, origin of 6, 7; constables as assistants to 10; corruption of urban 11; duty of quelling riots 16; commissioners of police as 28, 55-56, 96
- Leading articles, as dictation test 103
- Lanterns, police 142, 277
- Launches, police 276, 277
- Libraries, police 141
- Licensed premises, duties of police in connection with 117-118
- London, City of, police 8-9, 143; City opposition to Police Bill of 1785, 17, 18
- London, County of and Metropolitan Police District 28, 76-77
- Lost Property Office 118-120, 238
- Magistrate, Chief at Bow Street 13, 22, 25, 150
- Magistrates, stipendiary introduction of 18-20
- Magistrates and police 31-32, 60-61, 134-135, 270
- Magna Charta 3
- Marine police, establishment of 21 (see *River Police*)
- Married quarters 141-142, 270-271
- Mechanical aids to traffic control 250-252
- Mechanisation of the police 85, 275
- Medical service 112-114
- Mess rooms 141
- Metropolitan Police Courts Act 1839, 18
- Middlesex, early policing of 9, 10; sessions 11; the London and Westminster Police Bill 17, 18; the Middlesex and Surrey Justices Act 19; criminal offences in 26
- "Militarism" in the police 39, 46, 48, 55
- Military aid for police, 16, 24-25, 38, 51, 60, 67
- Morning Reports 132
- Motorcabs 229-230
- Motor-car offences 286-288
- Motorists and police 247, 286-288
- Motor transport, police 85, 275-277
- Motor launches 276, 277
- Mounted police 44, 209-212, 274
- Municipal Corporations Act, establishment of police under 61
- Murders in London 176
- Napoleon and police 59, 151
- Naval and military stations, police at 81, 217-218
- Night clubs 116, 117
- Nursing Home, at Denmark Hill 114

- Observer, The* 239  
 Occurrence book 138  
 Officer, the term "police officer" 14, 279  
 Omnibuses 225-226, 229-232, 234-235  
 Officials, police not known as 279, tendency to become 291  
 Orders, daily police 132 (for *General Orders* see under *General*)  
 Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race, duty of police to keep the course 207, 208  
 Oxford Street 15, 239; disturbances in 25, 44  
  
 Paris, police in 59, 95, 97, 126, 151, 158-159, 170, 188, 191, 282 (see also under *French police*)  
 Parks, police in 213-214  
 Patrols, winter, employment of 156  
 Pawnbrokers list 201 (see *Gazette*)  
 Pay, police 262, 263  
 Peel House, police school at 103-104  
 "Peelers," origin of term, 25  
 Pensions, police, growth of 263-269  
 Petty sessional courts, development of 12  
 Photographs 190-191, 198, 297  
 Photographic department 180  
 Piccadilly, disturbances in 25; cost of policing Piccadilly Circus 263  
 Pistols, for police 143, 144  
 Plain clothes, police in 151-152, 163  
  
 Pocket book, constables supplied with 137, 138  
 Poland, British police methods introduced in 35  
 Point duty, explanation of 137; introduction of 40, 82; working of 86; traffic points 246, 286-287  
 "Police," origin and meaning of 1, 9, 95, 116  
 Police Architect and Surveyor (see *Chart* 97) 270  
 Police Engineer (see *Chart* 97) 275  
 Police office, at 4, Whitehall Place and Scotland Yard, 93-94  
 Police offices (police courts) 18-19, 31, 61  
 Politics and police 184-185  
 Political uses of police 17, 19, 58-60, 151, 184-185  
 Popay case 152  
 Population, ratio of police to 85-87  
 Port of London Authority, and river police 209  
 Press Bureau, at Scotland Yard 120-121  
 Prevention of crime, the object of police 21, 34, 280  
 Prison vans 139  
 Promotion, by selection and examination 139, 140  
 Provincial police forces, relation of Scotland Yard with 168-9 (See also *Preface*)  
 Prussia, police organisation in 64, 97, 167 (see also *Berlin, police in*)  
*Public Advertiser, The* 201

- Public Carriage Office, at Lambeth 95
- Public Carriages, meaning of term 224; duties of police in connection with 228-233; inspection of 230-231; proprietors' licenses 232; drivers and conductors 232-233; licensing committee 233; numbers of vehicles and drivers 234; cab standings 235; fares 236-237; property left in 238
- Public offices (police courts) 12
- Punch*, quotations from 42, 43
- Quarters, married, provision of 141, 142
- Queen Caroline riots 24, 25
- Quis custodiet?* 282-283
- Ranks, gradation of 123, 124, 125
- Ratcliffe Highway murders 22
- Rate, police 256-261
- Rattles, used by police 144
- Receiver of Police, appointment decided on by Peel 30, 253-254; controls expenditure 65, 253; other responsibilities 255, 263, 269-278; holds office from the Crown 254; a corporation sole 254
- Records (see *Criminal Records*)
- Recruiting, for the police 37, 97-101; preliminary education of recruits 102-104; extent to which recruits drawn from Army 32, 97-98
- Reform Bill riots 37, 59
- Reform of old police system, Bow Street 12; London and Westminster Police Bill 17, 18; Middlesex and Surrey Justices Act 19; Dr. Colquhoun's proposals 20; river police 21; reform of criminal law 26; Peel's reform 27-28
- Rent aid 142, 262
- Reserves, police 83-84, 142
- Riot Act 16
- Riot (Damages) Act, 255
- Riots (see under *Gordon Riots*, *Hyde Park*, *Queen Caroline*, *Reform Bill*, *Sunday Observance*, *Trafalgar Square*)
- River police, establishment of 21, 205-207; oldest part of police force 21, 206; Dr. Colquhoun and 21, 205-206; Jeremy Bentham and 205; their duties 207-208; relations with Port of London Authority 209
- Roads Act 286
- Road Guards 240
- Robert and Robot 85
- Royal Commissions, 21, 62, 180-184
- Royal Irish Constabulary 56; employed in London 185
- St. Thomas's Hospital 113, 114
- Savidge, Miss, case of 68-71, 181
- Scandal, police 70, 71; "the Scotland Yard Scandal" 43, 157
- Scientists, not employed at Scotland Yard 179, 180

- Scotland, procedure as to interrogation of suspects 181
- Scotland Yard, the building 93, 94; its various departments 96, 97
- Secretariat, the, duties of 118, 119
- Section Houses, single men reside at 141; description of 274
- Sidney Street, alien desperadoes 52
- Special Branch, part of the C.I.D. 165; English substitute for political police 184; origin of 185, 186; and Irish extremists 186; in the Great War 186, 187; its normal duties 187; recruiting for 187
- Special Constabulary, appointment of special constables 218, 219; in the Great War 219, 220; formation of permanent force 220, 269; duties, etc. 220-221; uniform and equipment of 221.
- Special employment of police 212-218
- Pikes, police as 151-153, 156-157, 158, 163-164
- Staff, carried by old police 153
- Staff College, proposal as to, for police 103
- Standing Joint Committee as Police Authority 58
- State and police 58, 74
- Station officers, duties of 133, 134; deal with charges 135, 136
- Stations police, their area 136; description of 140, 141, 273
- Stolen property, compromising for the restitution of 26
- Stores 274, 275
- Streetkeepers, police as 239-240
- Street offences 42, 46, 163
- Strikes, police 41-43, 50-53.
- Suffragettes 52, 186
- Summonses 118, 288
- Superintendents, in charge of Divisions 32, 123, 125, 130; post filled by promotion 131; weekly attendance at Scotland Yard 131; at first not well disposed towards detective police 157
- Sunday Observances Bill riots 36
- Surveyor, the Police (see *Chart*, 97) 270
- Swords 143-144
- Telephone boxes, new method of policing the Metropolitan Police District 84, 272, 277
- Times*, *The* 39, 103
- Thames division (see *River police*)
- "Third degree" 183 (see also *Preface*)
- Tithingman 4, 5
- Titely, case of 160
- Trade Unionism, in police 41, 53, 54, 293
- Trafalgar Square, riots in 44, 46, 47
- Traffic control, early regulations as to 239; traffic signals 240, 243, 250-252; properly a police function, 241; powers of Commissioner as to 242; general and special limits 245, 246; speed limits 247; congestion of 248; Traffic advisory Committee 249
- Truncheons 143-144

- Uniform, an innovation 151, 152;  
supply of 274, 275; letter of  
Division and number worn on  
143
- Union, the Police 41, 53, 54, 293
- Vidocq, formation of detective  
corps in Paris by 151
- Vienna, police organisation in  
127
- Warrant officers 138
- Watch Committee, as Police  
Authority 58
- Watch houses 271
- Watchman, parish 9-11
- Waterloo 31, 35, 55, 121
- Waterloo Pier Station 208
- Weekly Convict List 191
- Weekly Rest Day for police 83
- Wellington, lying-in-state of 35
- West End divisions 89-91
- West India Merchants and  
River police 21, 205, 206
- Westminster, early policing of  
9, 10, 17; sessions 11; Gordon  
Riots in 16; London and  
Westminster Police Bill 17,  
18; increase of criminal  
offences in 26; 4, Whitehall  
Place 28
- West Riding of Yorkshire, Crime  
Index at Wakefield 200
- Whistles 144, 296-297
- Whitehall Place, the original  
Police Office 28, 93, 94
- Wireless, use of for police  
purposes 111, 170, 179, 277-  
278
- Women Police, introduction of  
221; how employed 222;  
patrols 223
- Yellow police stations 272

## INDEX OF NAMES

- Asquith, H. H. (subsequently Earl of Oxford and Asquith) 191  
 Atcherley, Maj.-Gen. Sir L. W. 200
- Bailey, Captain 235  
 Baker, Sir Robert 25  
 Bassom, Chief Constable 250  
 Belt, Mr. 42  
 Bentham, Jeremy 205, 207  
 Bertillon, Dr. 191  
 Birnie, Sir Richard 150  
 Bradford, Sir Edward 50, 51, 52, 163  
 Brampton, Lord 184  
 Browne, Frederick Guy 301, 305-313  
 Bruce, Mr. (afterwards Lord Aberdare) 39, 63  
 Burleigh, Lord 9  
 Byng, Viscount, of Vimy 55, 68
- Canterbury, Archbishop of 119  
 Caroline, Queen, 24, 25  
 Cass, Miss 46, 71  
 Cave, Sir George (subsequently Viscount Cave) 53, 74  
 Chadwick, Mr. 62  
 Charles II 2, 218  
 Childers, Mr. 45  
 Chubb, William 78, 152  
 Collins, Wilkie 154  
 Colquhoun, Dr. Patrick 20, 21, 205, 206, 254, 256  
 Cream, Neil 163
- D'Angely, Mme. 52  
 Darling, Mr. Justice 232  
 De Quincey 22  
 Derby, Lord 155  
 Desborough, Lord 54, 63  
 De Veil, Colonel Sir Thomas 12, 13  
 Dickens, Charles 16, 153, 154, 281  
 Dilnot, George 157  
 Disraeli 1  
 "Dora" 293  
 Dowling, Vincent 20  
 Drummond, Thomas 19  
 Dunbar, the poet 86  
 Dundas 20
- Evelyn, the diarist 31
- Fielding, Henry 12, 13, 19, 23, 280  
 Fielding, Sir John, 12, 14, 189, 201, 210, 280  
 Fitzmaurice, Lord 17  
 Ford, Sir Richard 210  
 Fosdick, Mr. 126, 167  
 Fowler 163  
 Frederick the Great 59, 180  
 Frith, Algernon R. A. 154
- Galton, Sir Francis 192, 195  
 Gamp, Mrs. 281  
 George IV 1, 27, 36  
 Goddard, Ex-Station Sgt. 110, 283  
 Good, Daniel 153



- Goulburn, Henry 254  
 Graham, Sir James 59, 153  
 Gross, Dr. Hans 180  
 Grosvenor, Lord Robert 37  
 Gutteridge, P.C. 168, 295, 296,  
 298, 306, 308, 309  
  
 Harcourt, Sir William 72, 160,  
 161, 272  
 Harriott, Captain 205  
 Hawkins, Sir John 11  
 Hay, Captain William 35, 36  
 Henderson, Sir Edmund 40, 44,  
 45, 48, 50, 155, 157  
 Henry II 3  
 Henry III 3  
 Henry IV 16  
 Henry VIII 93  
 Henry, Sir Edward 51, 52, 53,  
 54, 74, 102, 179, 192, 195, 197,  
 222  
 Holmes, Sherlock 164, 178  
 Horwood, Sir William 55  
  
 "Jack the Ripper" 48, 83, 162  
 James I of Scotland 93  
 Johnson, Dr. 12  
 Joynson-Hicks, Sir William 68,  
 70  
  
 Kennedy Jones, M.P. 248  
 Kennedy, "Pat" 301, 309, 310  
 311, 312, 313  
  
 Lamb, Charles 239  
 Lansdowne, Lord 20  
 Lee, Viscount of Fareham 163,  
 181, 283  
 Léon Ameline, Boivin & Cie 279  
 Liverpool, Earl of 24  
 Lowe, Robert 42  
  
 Macaulay, Lord 1  
 Macdonald, Sir Archibald (of  
 the Isle of Skye) 18  
 Macmillan, Rt. Hon. H. P.,  
 K.C., M.P. 163, 215, 283  
 Macready, Sir Nevil 54, 55, 222  
 Maitland 2, 4  
 Margaret, Queen of Scotland 93  
 Matthews, Henry 47, 49  
 Mattinson, Sergeant 309  
 Maynard, 168  
 Mayne, Sir Richard 31, 33, 34,  
 35, 36, 38, 39, 40, 121, 125,  
 154, 217  
 Melbourne, Lord 33  
 Melville, Lord 20  
 Messiter 168  
 Millsom 163  
 Monro, James 48, 49, 50, 51, 74,  
 162  
  
 Napoleon I 59, 151  
 Napoleon III 82, 158  
  
 Olive, Sir James 56  
  
 Pace, Mrs. 168  
 Peel Sir Robert 1, 2, 9, 14, 15,  
 18, 20, 25-28, 30-34, 38, 43, 59,  
 61, 72, 75, 76, 78, 121, 125,  
 147, 207, 275 (see also *Preface*)  
 Pepys, Samuel 224  
 Pitt, William 17, 20  
 Popay, P.C. 152, 153  
*Punch*, 42, 43  
  
 Quinn, Sir Patrick, 185  
  
 Ramsay, Miss 72  
 Roscher, Dr. 196  
 Rowan, Sir Charles 31, 33, 34,  
 35, 62

## INDEX OF NAMES

- |                                   |                                 |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Sacco 311                         | Walpole Horace 11, 12           |
| Savidge, Miss 68, 70, 181         | Ward, Colonel Sir Edward 219    |
| Shaw, Norman 94                   | Warren, General Sir Charles 45, |
| Shelburne, Lord 17                | 46, 47, 48, 49, 73, 74          |
| Sheridan 19                       | Welch, Saunders 12, 280         |
| Shillibeer, George 226            | Wellington, Duke of 24, 26, 30, |
| Sidmouth, Lord 14, 20, 33         | 31, 35, 59, 60, 82              |
| Socrates 183                      | Wild, Jonathan 23               |
| Stack, Sir Lee 311                | Williams the murderer 22        |
| Stromont, Lord 16                 | William III 23                  |
|                                   | Wontner, Messrs. 43             |
| Stytle 160, 161                   | Wray, John 254                  |
| Sucetich 196                      |                                 |
| Sanzetti 311                      | " X " Madame 169                |
| Victoria, Queen 83, 155, 186, 242 |                                 |
| Sidocq, 151                       |                                 |
| St Vincent, Sir Howard 49, 157,   | Yardley, Charles 121            |
| 158, 162                          |                                 |



